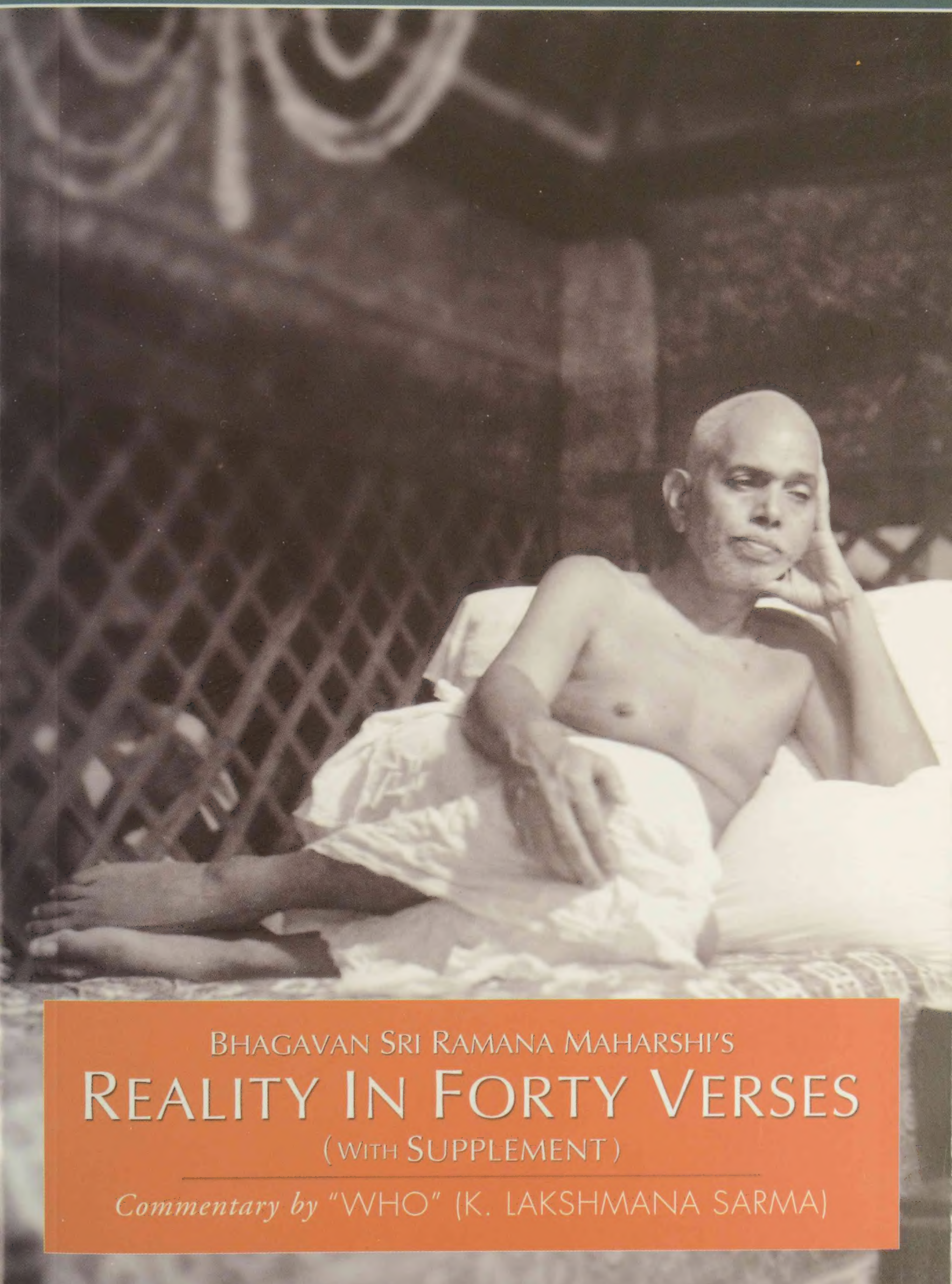

BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI'S

REALITY IN FORTY VERSES

(WITH SUPPLEMENT)

Commentary by "WHO" (K. LAKSHMANA SARMA)

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Original *Ślokas* of *Supplement* and
'Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu' in *Kali Veṇbā* form and
meanings of the link-words in the Appendix

Translated from Tamil *by*
'KAYS'

Sri Ramanasramam
Tiruvannamalai
INDIA

REALITY IN FORTY VERSES (WITH SUPPLEMENT)
(English):
Original Tamil Commentary of *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu* by 'Who' (K. Lakshmana Sarma)
Translated by 'KAYS'

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Publisher's Note

This commentary on *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu* is from the pen of one who initially demurred to study this text on the plea that his knowledge of Tamil would not measure up to plumb the depth and worth of the Text that abounds in rich nuances of Tamil prosody. Bhagavan graciously offered to tutor him and this edifying education continued for three long years. Lakshmana Sarma, the avid student that he was, absorbed the contents and meticulously translated them in chaste Sanskrit, verse for verse and submitted them for Bhagavan's approval. He went on pruning it until the perfected draft got the stamp of approval by Bhagavan. Such repeated and resolute attempts at perfecting the Sanskrit translation elicited from Bhagavan the remark that "no one has studied *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu* so well as Sarma has and his constant endeavours constituted his 'tapas'."

Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu took complete possession of him and he regarded the verses of the Text as the sacred emanations from Brahman personified – Bhagavan – the very incarnation of the Truth we all seek. Sarma's firm belief that *Ātma Vicāra*, the core teaching of *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu* is the Great Yoga or Mahā Yoga was further authenticated by Bhagavan himself by quoting a verse from *Kūrma Purāṇa* (2-11-7) wherein Lord Śiva declares: "That (yoga) in which one sees the Self (Ātman) which is Me, the one immaculate and eternal Bliss is considered to be 'mahāyoga' pertaining to the Supreme Lord."

यन्न पश्यति चात्मानं नित्यानन्दं निरञ्जनम्।
मनमेकं स महायोगो भाषितः परमेश्वरः॥
– कूर्मपुराणम्

While it is commonly held that the testimony of sages renders authenticity to Vedānta, the Sacred lore of this hallowed land, Sarma's unassailable conviction was that the Sacred lore provides the testimony to and a commentary on the "Svānubhava" of Sri Bhagavan.

The commentary of Lakshmana Sarma in Tamil was first published in 1936 under the pseudonym 'Who?'. The self-effacing Sarma once explained, "I wrote the commentary as I heard them explained by Bhagavan and Muruganar. So I wondered who wrote the commentary." Hence the nom de plume 'Who'.

It is a compact compilation of explanations that issued forth as the very utterances of Sri Bhagavan. Whenever any one required a clarification on the contents of any verse, Bhagavan would at once refer to the relevant portion of the commentary kept ready at hand.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the text of forty verses on Reality reveals the light of Reality and this commentary by Sarma leads us to that light by focussing our attention on it.

Key to Transliteration

Vowels

a	அ	अ	Short 'a', pronounced like 'u' in cut
ā	ஆ	आ	Long 'a', pronounced like 'a' in father
i	இ	इ	Short 'i', pronounced like 'e' in English
ī	ஈ	ई	Long 'i', pronounced like 'ee' in see
u	உ	उ	Short 'u', pronounced like 'u' in put
ū	ஊ	ऊ	Long 'u', pronounced like 'oo' in moon
ḷ		ऌ	Short vocalic 'l', pronounced like 'lry' in revelry (not to be confused with the Tamil consonant ள், which is also transliterated as *ḷ*)
ḹ		ॡ	Long vocalic 'l'
e	எ	(ऐ)	Short 'e', pronounced like 'e' in else
ē	ஏ	ए	Long 'e' pronounced like 'ai' in aid
ai	ஐ	ऐ	Diphthong 'ai', pronounced like 'ai' in aisle
o	ஒ	(ओ)	Short 'o', pronounced like 'o' in go, low
ō	ஓ	ओ	Long 'o', pronounced like 'o' in show, coal
au	ஔ	औ	Diphthong 'au', pronounced like 'ou' in sound

Consonantal Diacritics:

k̲	◌̲	This letter called in Tamil *āytam*, indicating gutturalization of the preceding vowel, pronounced like 'ch' in loch. It has special usage too. When used before the letter ப -'pa' as like க்ப it is pronounced as 'fa'
ṁ	◌ं	Sanskrit *anusvara*, indicating nasalization of the preceding vowel, pronounced like 'm' or (when followed by certain consonants) 'ṅ' 'ñ' or 'n'
ḥ	◌ः	Sanskrit *visarga*, indicating frication (or lengthened aspiration) of the preceding vowel, pronounced like 'h' followed by a slight echo of the preceding vowel

Consonants:

k	க்	क्	Velar plosive, unvoiced and unaspirated (pronounced like 'k' in skip)
kh	(க்)	ख्	Velar plosive, unvoiced but aspirated (pronounced like 'kh' in khaki)
g	க்	ग्	Velar plosive, voiced but unaspirated (pronounced like 'g' in game)
gh	(க்)	घ्	Velar plosive, voiced and aspirated
ṅ	ங்	ङ्	Velar nasal (pronounced like 'ng' in sing)
c	ச்	च्	Palatal plosive, unvoiced and unaspirated
ch	(ச்)	छ्	Palatal plosive, unvoiced but aspirated (pronounced like 'ch' in approach)
j	ச் [ஜ்]	ज्	Palatal plosive, voiced but unaspirated (pronounced like 'j' in jug)
jh	(ச்)	झ्	Palatal plosive, voiced and aspirated
ñ	ஞ்	ञ्	Palatal nasal (pronounced like 'ny' in canyon)

ṭ	ட்	ट्	Retroflex plosive, unvoiced and unaspirated (pronounced like 't' in tumbler)
ṭh	(ட்)	ठ्	Retroflex plosive, unvoiced and aspirated (pronounced like 't' in tata)
ḍ	ட்	ड्	Retroflex plosive, voiced but unaspirated (pronounced like 'd' in daddy)
ḍh	(ட்)	ढ्	Retroflex plosive, voiced and aspirated
ṇ	ண்	ण्	Retroflex nasal (pronounced like 'n' in under)
t	த்	त्	Dental plosive, unvoiced and unaspirated (pronounced like 't' in thumb)
th	(த்)	थ्	Dental plosive, unvoiced but aspirated
d	த்	द्	Dental plosive, voiced but unaspirated (pronounced like 'th' in that)
dh	(த்)	ध्	Dental plosive, voiced and aspirated
n	ந்	न्	Dental nasal (pronounced like 'n' in nun, month, enthusiasm)
p	ப்	प्	Labial plosive, unvoiced and unaspirated (pronounced like 'p' in pool)
ph	(ப்)	फ्	Labial plosive, unvoiced but aspirated
b	ப்	ब्	Labial plosive voiced but unaspirated
bh	(ப்)	भ्	Labial plosive, voiced and aspirated
m	ம்	म्	Labial nasal (pronounced like 'm' in slam, mom)
y	ய்	य्	Palatal semivowel (pronounced like 'y' in boy)
r	ர்	र्	Dental nap (in Tamil phonology) or retroflex trill (in Sanskrit phonology) (pronounced like 'r' in river)
l	ல்	ल्	Dental lateral approximant (pronounced like 'l' in lord)

v	வ்	व्	Labial semivowel (pronounced like 'v' in van)
ṙ	ழ்	–	Retroflex central approximant (transliterated as ḻ in the Tamil Lexicon, and commonly transcribed as *zh*)
ḷ	ள்	ळ्	Retroflex lateral approximant (pronounced like 'l' in Bible)
t̲	ற்	–	Alveolar plosive, unvoiced (pronunciation of ற only when it is muted, that is, not followed by a vowel)
d̲r̲	ற்	–	Alveolar plosive, voiced (pronunciation of ற only when it follows ன்)
r̲	ற்	–	Alveolar trill (pronunciation of ற when it follows and precedes a vowel) Hard 'r' as in mirror, error.
n̲	ன்	–	Alveolar nasal (pronounced like 'n' in pin)
ś	(ச்) [ஶ]	श्	Palatal aspirated sibilant, pronounced somewhat like 's' in sure (of 'sh' in she)
ṣ	ச் [ஷ]	ष्	Retroflex aspirated sibilant, pronounced somewhat like 's' in sure (or 'sh' in she), but with the tongue curled further back
s	ச் [ஸ]	स्	Dental aspirated sibilant, pronounced like 's' in see
h	க் [ஹ]	ह्	Voiced glottal fricative, pronounced like 'h' in hut

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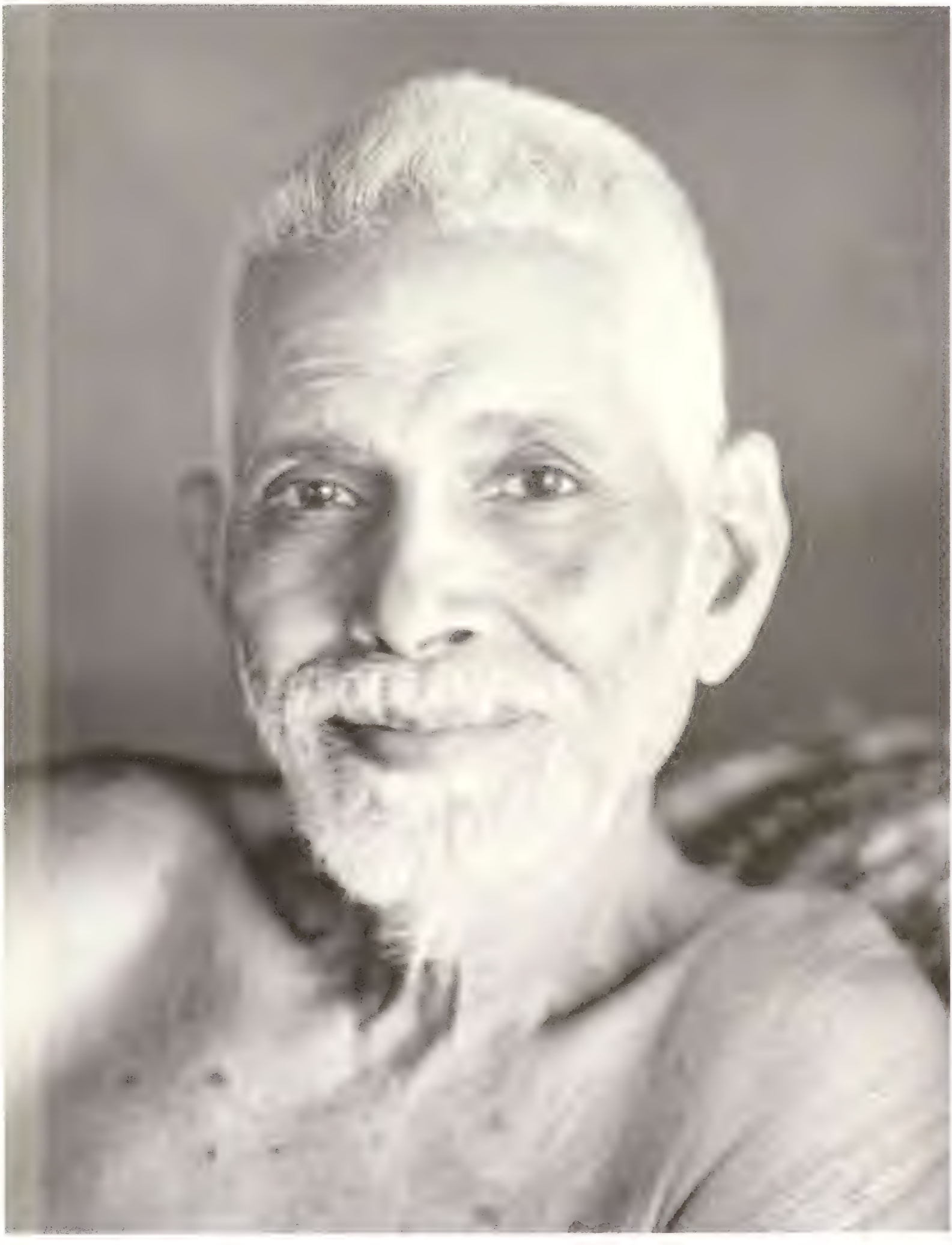

REALITY IN FORTY VERSES
(Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu)

Exegesis: Numerous indeed are the Texts of Spiritual Instructions graciously bestowed by Bhagavan, but that which claims pride of place among them is "*Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu*" which means "The Text that expounds 'THAT WHICH IS' (*uḷḷadu*), the Reality in Forty Verses".

Sri Bhagavan, who ever abided in *Sahaja* Samādhi – the experience of the union of Brahman and Ātman – instructs in this Text a direct path to the state he had realized as his constant experience viz. the State of Deliverance so that devotees or aspirants may seek and dwell in that Immaculate state of Non-dual Ātman (This state is different from anything else because it is a state of non-duality. There is no object to be known; nor is there a subject, a knower, the soul and hence there is no knowing).

Invocation

This text has two invocatory verses. The truth of That Ātman, that Non-Dual, Pure Being and Consciousness, abiding in which and verily as That in the Heart-Space within us is called *Mukti*, is spoken of in the first verse. The second one speaks of *Īśvara*, the *Saguṇa* Form (with name and form) of that same Ātman that confers the self-same Deliverance on those who surrender themselves (rather their ego-sense) in all devotion to that *Īśvara*.

Verse:

1. uḷḷadala duḷḷavuṇar vuḷḷadō vuḷḷaporu
ḷuḷḷalaṟa vuḷḷattē yuḷḷadā – luḷḷameṉu
muḷḷaporu ḷuḷḷaleva ṉuḷḷattē yuḷḷapaḍi
yuḷḷadē yuḷḷa luṇar.*

Padacchēdam (Verse-split into its component words): *uḷḷadu aladu, uḷḷa uṇarvu uḷḷadō? uḷḷa poruḷ uḷḷal aṟa uḷḷattē uḷḷadāl, uḷḷam eṉum uḷḷa poruḷ uḷḷal evaṉ? uḷḷattē uḷḷapaḍi uḷḷadē uḷḷal uṇar.*

Import: Can there be a feeling (awareness) of existence without something that is (exists)? Can there be a true awareness (Reality) other than 'That which is'? Since 'That which exists' dwells bereft of thoughts in the Heart – Itself called the Heart – who is there who can meditate on 'That which is' (*Satvastu*) and how to meditate? Know that to meditate on 'It', is to be as 'That *Satvastu* is' – to remain in the Heart without thoughts.

Commentary: Though there are three statements in this *veṇbā*, as the first affirmation has two different imports we may deem this verse to have four statements. The mere focus on the content of the Text, namely 'That which is' (the *Satvastu*), itself constitutes the Invocation. Further we are instructed that abiding verily as the content of that *Satvastu* – and not as apart from that *Vastu* unceasingly – constitutes Its meditation. As Bhagavan himself is ever established as the content of That, he is *par excellence* the ceaseless meditator

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* Since this – the first verse – contains the import of the entire Text, it would be ideal to return to this verse after perusing the whole Text, for a clearer and better grasp of the import of this verse.

of that *Vastu*, and we may take this verse to be an invocation to that Form of meditation (namely Bhagavan) as well!

i) uḷḷadu aladu uḷḷa uṇarvu uḷḷadō?

Is there a feeling of existence without something that exists?

Herein the considered conclusion, namely, there exists a *Satvastu* (That which is) – is propounded. Considering the unreality of the seemingly real triad, world, God and *jīvā*, as the foregone or established conclusion, there must need be the Truth of a substratum that provides the basis for their appearance. Therefore, there definitely is a *Satvastu* – That which is – which is spoken of as Brahman in the *Upanishads* is the teaching imparted here and this forms the first of the two imports of the same sentence.

Bhagavan has explained this content as follows: "Everybody perceives the world and himself who perceives the world. He further considers them both as real. If they are real, they must continue to shine uninterruptedly without disappearing. But they shine only intermittently and not constantly. Appearing in dream and wakeful states they disappear in deep sleep. In other words, they appear when the mind manifests itself and do not appear when the mind is not. Therefore rising and falling with the mind they are coextensive with it. Hence the *jīvā* who perceives and the world spectacle perceived are but thought-forms of the mind and are not real. That from which the thoughts of the mind emanate and into which they subside is the True *Vastu* that shines uninterruptedly." The same content is elucidated in verse seven as well.

A verse in chapter II of the *Bhagavad Gītā* '*nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ*' (There is never any

[real] existence for the unreal; neither is there any non-existence for the Real) vouchsafes the truth declared here, namely, the distinction between the Real *Vastu* and mere unreal appearances is that, that which appears intermittently is unreal and that which shines uninterruptedly is real.*

The averment of Sri Gaudapada that "What had no existence in the beginning and will not exist after sometime is not-existent even in the intervening period (during which it seems to exist)" also bears out this truth. Those who accept this definition of Truth are *Advaitins*; the others are *Dvaitins*. However all creeds are acceptable to Sri Bhagavan.

The analogy of a rope appearing as a snake is used to explain the statement declared here that though the world appearance is unreal, a *Satvastu* exists as its basis or substratum. Just as the rope is real and the snake a false appearance, the appearance of the triad, the *jīvā* (the individual soul), God and *jagat*† (the world) are unreal and Brahman alone is the sole Reality.

Since no snake can appear in the absence of a rope, the rope, the basic reality, is called the *adhiṣṭhāna* (substratum). As the snake is a mere appearance, imagined and projected, it is called *āropitam* (superimposed). Likewise Brahman – That

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* The test of Reality is the continuity of existence without change which is the evidence of transcendence of time and other elements of relativity.

† Though the world is one of triad, in the absence of the world the other two are not. They exist only when the world exists. Therefore whenever the world is referred to, it must be inferred that it includes the other two.

which is – is the Substratum. The *jīvā*, God and the world are imagined superimpositions on It.

This analogy throws light on yet another truth. The appearance of the imagined snake obscures the rope – the substratum – and the rope shines as rope only when the imagined snake ceases to appear, thus proving that it is the nature of superimposition (*āropitam*) to effectively conceal the truth of the substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*). Since 'what is' is just 'ONE', the imagined false appearance on It cannot but veil It. In the same way, the superimposed world precludes and prevents the truth of *adhiṣṭhāna* Brahman from shining. Though what is, is the sole Reality, Brahman, the Only one, It appears as the world not as 'It is' in Its Effulgence.

So long as Brahman is seen as the world Brahman will not shine as Brahman. Only in the state of Knowledge, the state of Experience of being the Self when the world appearance gets obliterated, will Brahman shine in Its own true Form – in all the splendour of One Unbroken Reality – the Self.

This nature of appearing and veiling is called *māyā*. Its inherent nature is to make the real appear as unreal and the unreal appear as the real. Man, precisely because of this power of *māyā*, stands deluded into taking the unreal world for the real and himself – a *jīvā* – inextricably caught up in it. Though in truth there is no such thing as *māyā*, one becomes aware of this truth only after the Experience of being the Self. Nonetheless until the dawn of Enlightenment, during the period when the world appears real the notion that *māyā* exists has to be acceded to. Everybody knows by common experience that very often that which remains as something appears as something else. In the same way, while the *Satvastu* – 'That which is' – remains bereft of names

and forms, transcending time and space with absolute non-difference solely as Pure Being and Awareness, we perceive It as the world. The disciple who queries the reason for this distortion is told by the master that it is the function of *māyā* known as nescience (primal ignorance) or *ajñāna*.

But 'That which is', the *Satvastu*, undergoes no change and ever remains the same never slipping from Its own Nature. This truth is called *Ajāta Siddhāntam** (The Truth of Non-Becoming). This is in tune with the Truth experienced by sages and the rationale of inferential logic. This will be discussed at a later stage.

The mental delusion of the perceiver (*jīvā*) is the cause for the appearance of a snake in a rope. The perceiver here being sentient – with awareness – the appearance of a snake is due to the wrong awareness engendered by mental delusion. In what is explained† here with an analogy further questions arise. By what light of awareness do these three, the *jīvā*, God and world appear? Do they appear by the light of awareness of something that is other than Brahman? Is Brahman then insentient or not? Further, is Brahman with Awareness or is Awareness just Its form? In other words, is Consciousness an attribute or a function of Brahman or is it Its very nature?

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* The Truth of Non-Becoming as categorically stated by sage Gaudapada in *Māṇḍūkya Kārika* is as follows: the world did not come into being nor it is going to be destroyed; no one called the individual soul, really was born; there is neither a bound one, nor one that has become free; nor is there any aspirant.

† That to explain which an analogy is used is called *Dhārshtāntikam* in Sanskrit and the analogy is called *dṛṣtāntam*. No analogy can be totally perfect and it cannot be extended to its logical end.

The answers to all these questions constitute the other – the second – import of the same sentence.

ii) uḷḷadaladu uḷḷa uṇarvu uḷḷadō?

The Awareness required for the *uḷḷa poruḷ* (*Satvastu*) to shine either as It is in truth or as the unreal world is none other than the *Satvastu* Itself. That *uḷḷa poruḷ* (That which is) is Itself the form of Awareness; a solid mass of *jñāna*, i.e. *jñāna* personified. In truth there is no other awareness apart from It for It to shine and It shines by Its own light of awareness, in its Self-revealing Effulgence or the Self is Self-revealed.

The fact that Brahman, the form of Awareness, alone remains the revealing light both when Brahman appears as the world during the period of ignorance and also when Brahman shines as It is – as Self – simply as Being Awareness is clear.*

A further import that is gleaned from this sentence is that as there is no True Awareness apart from Brahman the so-called *jīvā* that has no real existence appearing as if other than Brahman is a spurious awareness. The one, who as perceiver beholds the spectacle of the world, is this spurious awareness, the *jīvā*. Bhagavan has explained that this *jīvā*, the perceiver, is also a part of the world appearance and the same content is further clarified in the first verse as well (that goes *nāmulaham*).

Bhagavan christens this *jīvā* as *pōliuyir* (spurious or unreal soul or imitation soul) in one of the supplementary

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* The effulgence of Brahman is indeed the reason for world appearance. It is not totally veiled by the world. The Full unbroken awareness of Brahman shrinks as the ego-sense and reveals the world.

verses (verse 17). The *cidābhāsa* (reflected awareness or spurious awareness) that the *Vedāntic* Texts speak of is this *jīvā*. Men under the sway of nescience, regard him as the 'Self' or Ātman, name him *jīvātman* and God as *paramātman* and speak as if there are two Ātmans!! Other than Brahman, *uḷḷadu* (That which is) there is none other as *jīvā*, is the instruction bestowed. Hence the Ātman that we are, we are Brahman alone and not any other. This is the doctrine of union of Ātman and Brahman, the core teaching of the *Upanishads* and upheld by Sri Sankara as well. This is the Transcendental Truth that shines in all its splendour in the State of Knowledge or in the state of Experience of being the Self, but we, in the dense darkness of ignorance, unable to comprehend this Truth, take the spurious *jīvā* to be the Self and all else as other than that.

It is clear from this that Brahman, *uḷḷadu* (That which is) is the sole truth and It is also the Awareness that reveals Itself; Brahman alone is the Self (Ātman); and there is nothing, either sentient or insentient, as other than That. That remains without any kind of distinction such as the perceiver and the perceived spectacle. This indeed is the doctrine of *Advaita*. *Advaita* means the One sans a second.

Brahman here is not instructed as One with Awareness or Consciousness or Knowledge but That is Awareness Itself. What, then, is its import? The one with awareness or knowledge as its function or attribute is simply the intellect which is none other than the mind. Awareness or Knowledge is not the innate nature of the mind but is its property or function. Therefore this knowledge of the mind is inconstant and impermanent. In dreamless sleep the awareness of the mind subsides. Unlike this the Awareness that is the

nature and form of Brahman, is Eternal and changeless for Awareness is not Its function. The inalienable Awareness, the very form of Brahman, is imperishable unlike the mind that loses its awareness and perishes when plunged into swoon or sleep. Its 'Consciousness' form is inviolable and unaffected by Time, Space or by any other factor. It remains all by Itself in utter 'loneness' even when all the worlds become naught or extinct.

Though that 'Brahman is the very form of Awareness or Knowledge' deserves to be accepted by us by the sheer strength of the teaching itself, it can also be ascertained through logical reasoning supported by inferential deductions. The first of the two imports of the first sentence contains one such reasoning where we saw that Brahman indeed is the origin wherefrom mind and thoughts arise and subside into. Mind is sentient or an object with awareness and it follows that the object of its origin must either be with awareness or Awareness itself. If it is merely with awareness it becomes just another object like mind and cannot be *Sat* or a permanent entity or 'That which Ever is'. Therefore It is neither insentient (*jaḍa*) nor one with Awareness. What is It, then? That, then, *is* indeed Awareness or *Chit* or *Chaitanya* (Sentience) Itself. The conclusively established doctrine of the entire gamut of the Vedānta is that the Self that is Brahman is not one *with* Awareness but It is *Chaitanya* or Sentience Itself. Hence it is called *Sat-Chit*.

There are other arguments as well and one such rationale is as follows: since Brahman cannot be spoken of as One with awareness It must be either *jaḍa* (insentient) or *chaitanya* (sentient). If not *jaḍa*, It will be inferred to be sentient. It cannot be called insentient for then it would imply that It is not Self-effulgent since all that is *jaḍa* or insentient, not being

Self-revealing, shine by the light of some other awareness. Then the question "by what light of awareness does Brahman shine?" arises; to which the protagonist will say "by some sentience or awareness that is other than That." It would at once be asked whether that *Chit* or awareness is *Sat* or *Asat* (The test of Reality is continuity of existence without change – it should always be real; be present at all times; not confined by names and forms or other limitations). It can't be postulated as *asat* for nothing can be made to shine by '*asat*'. If It is said to be '*sat*', then It will necessarily have to be *sat* and *chit,* which means that the same *vastu* can be both *sat* and *chit*. This has been accepted and nothing prevents one from concluding that the aforesaid s*at* – that Brahman – be *chit* as well. This is the best way logically. That *Sat,* that is the substratum of the world, is Self-revealing in Its own Self-effulgence requiring no other awareness to reveal It. Abandoning this reasoning if that *Sat* is argued to be non-Self-effulgent, the other '*Chit'* that reveals it also cannot be presumed to be Self-effulgent either by the same logic requiring yet another *Chit* to light it up and reveal the earlier *chit*. Thus the projection of countless non Self-effulgent *chits* will have to go on *ad infinitum*, and the argument would suffer from the fallacy of *anavastā doṣam* or making it interminable. Brahman, the *Satvastu*, That which is, is *Chit* by itself, is the fair and logical conclusion by all these and anything contrary to this must be deemed as fallacious.

The nature of Brahman is thus conclusively seen to be two-fold: namely 'Being' (*Sat*) and 'Awareness' (*Chit*) thereby coming to be known as *Sat-Chit*. ***Sat* means 'That which is' and *Chit* means 'The Existent Feeling' or 'Awareness' or *Jñāna* or Sentience.** One should not give way to delusion

wondering "Is this all the *Svarūpa* – the nature and form of Brahman?" What has been attempted to reveal is that the nature of Brahman is other than the unreal world and mind and by no means a description in full of the *Svarūpa* or the real nature of Brahman which can be known only by the direct and most immediate experience and not in any other way, logical or otherwise.

The fact that Brahman is the form of *Chit* does in no way mean that the mind that is seemingly sentient is *Chit* in truth. That it is *jaḍa* or insentient just like the world is what is asserted and further explained in verse 22 of this Text that starts with *matikkoḷi taṇḍu* (imparting to the mind the light of consciousness).

If we are, in Truth, that *Sat-Chit-Ānanda*, Brahman, in other words, if That be our Self, why then are we not aware of our True Reality? Why do we regard ourselves as these mean *jīvās* or these bodies or worldlings exposed to the trammels of *saṃsāra*? The following sentence provides the answer to this query.

iii) uḷḷa poruḷ uḷḷalaṟa uḷḷattē uḷḷadāl
uḷḷameṉum uḷḷaporuḷ uḷḷal evaṉ?

Bhagavan himself has graciously clarified that here the word *evaṉ* (who) must be taken in two senses as 'Who' and 'How'.

This statement affirms that Brahman is without a mind and ever tranquil. It is in the 'Heart' called *uḷḷam* or *hṛdayam*. That Brahman, 'That which is', shines as It is, only in the Heart where the mind is extinct. In an externalized and active mind (in an extroverted mind), It will not shine as It truly is which means then It will appear only as the individual soul,

God and the world. This is one of the numerous reasons why Brahman is beyond contemplation by the mind.

One of them is expounded in the 22nd verse *matikkoḷi taṇḍu* – imparting the light of Awareness to the mind. Two reasons are posited here. The nature of the mind is to superimpose on the Immaculate Non-dual Brahman imagined differences and venerate them as Real, is one. A sentient being – a *jīvā* – as other than Brahman, to contemplate on It, is non-existent, is the other.

Let us analyse the first one. The mind creates an imaginary, 'within', and 'without' and further creates in the imaginary without many worlds, the other *jīvās* or individual souls and God. This is but the innate nature of the mind. We have already seen that Brahman is the sole basic Truth as the substratum for all these imaginary projections, and as such they are mere superimpositions on the Brahman. By the logic of the imagined superimpositions concealing and preventing the substantive Truth of the underlying ground reality from shining as it truly is, we know that the projected world and others obstruct the *Adhiṣṭhāna* – Brahman – from shining as It is. So long the mind is externalized, thus long will Brahman appear as the world, individual soul and God and not as Brahman. But if the mind were to be inward-turned, it uniting itself with the Heart – the place of its origin – losing its nature as mind abides there. Then the imagined triad disappearing, Brahmaṇ shines with no let or hindrance as the Self; though the mind can neither perceive nor know it.

Though the 'Heart' – *uḷḷam* – is spoken of here as being the seat of Brahman, since in truth, It is not other than Brahman, It is neither a seat or dwelling place nor is Brahman confined to any one specified place alone. The Heart is spoken of as the seat of Brahman to stress the need for the aspirant

desiring the Experience of Being the Self to become inward-turned, abandoning the mind's tendency to be exteriorized. That *uḷḷam*, the Heart, Itself is Brahman and Brahman is the Heart is elucidated by the words *uḷḷameṉum uḷḷa poruḷ* – the *Satvastu* that is *uḷḷam*.

As Brahman is said to be in the Heart, It shines as It is with the subsidence of the mind and will not shine when the exteriorized mind indulges in frenzied activity. Then the three imagined triad will veil the Brahman: thus it is known that Brahman will not be known to people with moorings externalized.

The other reason advanced is that there is no sentient Being other than Brahman, as one apart from It, to contemplate It. The *jīvā* who fondly prides himself as the knower of other objects, we have seen, is but a spurious one – *pōliuyir*. When the mind is outward-bent, such a one will appear as if real; but if the mind, turned inward, subsides in the Heart, he, annihilated, becomes extinct. He, being an imagined entity, is naught as one to contemplate on Brahman, it is said Brahman cannot be contemplated on.

But then, is there or not a way at all to meditate (*uḷḷuvadaṟku*) on the Self or Brahman? The fourth sentence of this *veṇbā* gives a meet response to this question.

iv) uḷḷattē uḷḷa paḍi uḷḷadē uḷḷal uṇar

The true meditation of the Supreme Reality (Brahman) is to be as That Brahman (Self) Itself is, in the thought-free state, is the import of this sentence.

The mind sunk within becoming united as one with Brahman which is not other than the Heart, losing its nature as mind and remaining as Self, 'moveless' and Quiescent Peace

is true meditation. This is called the State of Experience of Self Knowledge.

Though it is described as 'meditation' it is not one conducted by the mind. Contemplation by the mind is accompanied by the triad of meditator, object of meditation, and the meditation. But this state is bereft of a *triputi*. Other than this, as no other form of meditation is acceptable, this itself is called 'meditation'. Bhagavan used to say, *Pūja*, Devotion, Vision and Knowledge are all only this. They are all contained in this. This state is called Deliverance and *Turīya*. The direct path for the mind to become inward-turned and get sunk in the Heart – the *Sādhana* – is further elucidated in the 28th verse and in other places as well.

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Exegesis: Brahman, the *nirguṇa* (attributeless) form of which was dwelt upon in the first invocatory verse, appears with form and attributes (*saguṇa*) for the sake of yet other devotees. When the mind has resolved into the Ego-less State, Brahman is *nirguṇa* (attributeless) and is *saguṇa* (with the attributes) when the mind is functional. Then it is called *Īśvara* or God. Those who love God with pure devotion finally offer their very selves (ego-sense) to Him thereby becoming the fit recipients of His Grace, obtain the same pure Non-dual Experience of Being the Self. The averment of this Truth forms the content of the second invocatory verse:

2. maraṇabhaya mikkuḷavam makkaḷara ṉāha maraṇabhava millā mahēśaṉ – caraṇamē cārvartañ cārvoḍutāñ cāvuṯṟār cāveṇṇañ cārvarō cāvā davar.

Verse-split: *maraṇa bhayam mikku uḷa ammakkaḷ araṇ āha maraṇa bhavam illā mahēśaṉ caranamē cārvar; tam cārvoḏu tām cāvuttṟār; cāvu eṇṇam cārvarō cāvādavar?*

Import: Virtuous people, seized with intense fear of death, to sunder that fear, seek as refuge and surrender themselves unto the Lord who is free from birth and death. Thereby their ego ('I') along with their attachments (mine) gets destroyed. Will they, having become deathless, entertain thought of death?

Commentary: Fear of death assails all at some point of time but passes away without striking any significant impact. The fleeting and so-called 'dispassion of the cremation ground' triggered by close encounters with death is short-lived and gets extinguished with enjoyment of objects of pleasure like good food, etc. But men of higher calibre and made of sterner stuff do not allow the impact of death on them to wane but ever remember, seek a remedy instantly and reach a sublime goal.

For men ensnared by the *māyā* of the world and enslaved by nescience, the painful woes of *saṃsāric* life are but stepping stones leading to the door to Release. Bhagavan says: "When one dreams while asleep, so long as the dreams are pleasant and joyful, he will not wake up from slumber but sorrowful or frightful visions shake him up to wakefulness. So long as the world appears to be a stretch of placid enjoyment the worldling (wallowing in *saṃsāra*) will not wake up from the *māyā* world to his own Truth. Only encounters with the tragic aspect of *saṃsāra* or fear of death can drive one towards Deliverance." Though one is aware of the certainty of death, fear of death does not arise intensely

until one comes face to face with it. The knowledge born out of personal experience that worldly life is riddled with sorrow turns one through dispassion towards *nivritti mārga*, the path of withdrawal from activity or of renunciation. A few highly illustrious personages at the very thought of or by merely pondering over death turn to the path of knowledge and gain Release. Lord Buddha and Bhagavan Sri Ramana who bestowed this Text, are two such.

A mind that has so turned away from the mundane world and its ensnaring holds comes under the sway of the Grace of Lord Mahesa who is free of birth and death. Such descent of Grace turns the mind inward and unifies it with the Supreme Reality when the ego-sense – the 'I' rising in respect of the body – along with the *vāsanās* of various bonds it is impregnated with, gets annihilated. What is left behind is the deathless Immortal Self.

Ahaṃkāra or ego-sense is the wrong awareness that the body itself is the Self. So long as this wrong notion persists, death of the body is considered one's own death. But that, the very thought of death, is uprooted with the annihilation of this wrong awareness, is what is revealed here.

The heart of the teaching of this Text is the quest of the Self – *Ātma Vicāra* – the *sādhana* with Release as the goal. That which aids, prepares for and guides the *sādhana* is *satyāsatya vivekam*, the discriminative knowledge between *Sat* and *asat* or ascertainment through discrimination of what is real and unreal. The Quest of the Self endows on one the attainment of the experience of the Self.

A detailed analysis of the import of Discrimination, Enquiry and Experience find mention in almost all the verses. However the order of serialization in the Text, on a closer

look, reveals that verses dwelling primarily on discrimination occupy the first place, those that spell out *vicāra* or Enquiry come next and finally come those that describe the Experience. Hence this commentary has been divided into three broad heads namely *Viveka* (Discrimination), *Vicāra* (The Quest) and *Anubhava* (the Experience), to facilitate an easy, in depth and comprehensive grasp of all the three components of this Text.

Text

Viveka Adhyāyam
Chapter on Discrimination

Since *uḷḷa poruḷ* – 'That which is' – is indeed the Self or Ātman, the unreal appearance of the triad – the world, the individual soul and God – conceals the Self. While ironically the concealing world appears real and the concealed Self appears unreal, the pursuit of the Quest for the Self – the *sādhana* of *Vicāra* – becomes well-nigh impossible. The ascertainment by intellectual certitude that the unreality that conceals the Truth lacks reality and that the concealed Truth is Real, becomes a preliminary prerequisite to take up the Quest for the Self. Such an authentic confirmation of what is real or otherwise is called Discrimination and it becomes an indispensable preparatory tool prior to the Quest of the Self for aspirants for Deliverance. Hence the verses in this section elucidate clearly the method of such discrimination.

Exegesis: In order to explain that Brahman alone is the sole Reality and that the concealing world is a spurious manifestation, Bhagavan uses in this first verse the analogy of the motion picture or a cinema show and instructs that Brahman is the *Adhiṣṭhānam* – the Ground Reality – and the world a superimposition on it – *Āropitam*.

1. nāmulahaṅ kāṇḍalā ṉāṉāvāñ cattiyuḷa vōrmudalai yoppa lorutalaiyē – nāmavuruc cittiramum pārppāṉuñ cērpaḍamu māroḷiyu mattaṉaiyun tāṉā mavaṉ.

Verse-split: *nām ulaham kāṇḍalāl, nānā ām catti uḷa ōr mudalai oppal orutalaiyē, nāma uru cittiramum, pārppāṉum, cērpaḍamum, ār oḷiyum, attaṉaiyum tāṉ ām avaṉ.*

Import: Since we (the perceivers) see the world, the acceptance of the first principle (the primal cause) with power to exhibit Itself into various manifestations is beyond dispute. The various names and forms of the pictures (called the world), the *jīvā* who beholds it, the screen that supports and sustains the pictures and the light of Awareness that illumines them – all these (four) are but the Supreme Being who is the Real Self (within the Heart).

Commentary: That there is a *Vastu*, the Substratum or Ground Reality for the perceived world is what is declared at the very outset here. In order to clarify whether that *Vastu* – That which is – has in truth transformed Itself into the world or that It remains without undergoing any real change merely as the Ground for the world appearance, the phrase *nānāvām śaktiyuḷa* (possessing the power to appear as many) is used. A wondrous power which cannot be said to be other than 'That' but Itself, called *māyā*, appears thus as the many. But that *Vastu*, in truth, has in no way been distorted is the import. Brahman is simply the substratum for the world superimposed on it. The analogy offered here is the motion picture. Yet there is a fundamental difference between the cinema show and the world. In a cinema show the spectator of the motion picture is not part of the picture. He as a viewer, is separate or other than the picture and those in it. On the other hand, the spectator is part and parcel of the world spectacle seen. The perceiver of the world, in other

words, is not other than the perceived world. The individual and the world are one indivisible spectacle. If the world is declared unreal then he also becomes unreal. This constitutes a momentous exposition.

In the above comparison the pictures that appear and disappear are impermanent and therefore unreal. The lit up screen, motionless and ever changeless is constant and therefore real. Likewise (in the world spectacle) the spectator and spectacle seen – both being mere appearances – are unreal. The substratum *Sat-Chit* is real. As the ground for unreal appearances by virtue of Its nature of being the *Sat* and as the Light that illumines them by Its nature of being the *Chit*, indeed that Brahman alone *is*. The spurious world appears only on the real Brahman. Further it shines as real only by the Reality of Brahman, the very form of *jñāna*. The world has neither an existence nor the light of Awareness independent of the Real, by its own right. Further light is thrown on this content in the 13th verse that runs as *jñāṉamām tāṉē mey* (The Self, who is Consciousness alone, is real).

If the declaration of the *Upanishads*, that the world was created by Brahman and that Brahman became the world, is not true, the question arises will the *Upanishads* then proclaim so? The answer is that the world has neither an existence nor an effulgence of its own and that Brahman, the very form of *Sat-Chit*, is its substratum, is the esoteric and the inherent meaning of the *Upanishads*. And so do aver the sages who ever experience the state of being the Self.

The truth that is revealed here is that the *jīvā* who perceives, the perceived spectacle and others being not other than Brahman – the Substratum – they are all verily 'That'. The truth of the unreality of names and forms, by implication,

is the result. This is further elaborated in the 4th verse *uruvam tāṉ āyiṉ* (If the Self has form...).

This verse further goes on to say that, that *Sat-Chit* Itself is indeed *tāṉām avaṉ* (the Self He is). As the word *tāṉ* stands for the Ātman, it is instructed that "That is the Self".

It is most absurd to aver that Brahman, the Self, has in truth transformed itself into the world. This argument is analogous to saying that in the milk of Brahman, the buttermilk of nescience has got mixed resulting in the curd of the world. Nescience or ignorance is not an object. Can it effect a change in Brahman? Further just as milk once converted into curd cannot turn back into milk again, Brahman modified and transformed into world, cannot revert back as Brahman! If this be true it may justifiably be posed how can Brahman that cannot guard Its own Form from undergoing changes, then protect us?

If it is opined that an eternally changeless object is none, there will be no way of deliverance from *saṃsāra* for us. Lord Buddha has also proclaimed that there does exist an unchanging and unchangeable Reality and therefore there is a way for Release. As all sages have unequivocally declared with great clarity that Brahman is changeless, pure, unmodified Consciousness without ever swerving from Its natural state, the aforesaid argument can safely be ignored.

The content of this verse is to be understood as in the statement of snake and rope. The rope, never becoming a snake, appears as a snake during the spell under the sway of ignorance. Likewise during the sway of nescience Brahman appears as the world and like the rope appearing as rope in light and with proper knowledge, in the state of *jñāna*, in the

Light of right Awareness, the world appearance disappears and Brahman shines indeed as It is as the Self. The rope alone is the reality even when it appeared as the snake; even during the world-appearance Brahman – the Self – alone is the Truth. That the world is never real is the considered conclusion.*

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Exegesis: The principle of Ātman advocated here cannot be cognized either through intellectual excellence or theoretical knowledge gathered from texts or by logical inferences. The knowledge so gained can only be barren or fruitless at best. The philosophy of the Knowledge of the Self is to remain established in the form of Self as Self with the extinction of the ego-sense, mind and world appearance through the Quest of the Self enunciated further on, is the content of the following verse.

2. mummudalai yemmatamu muṟkoḷḷu mōrmudalē
mummudalāy niṟkumeṉḏṟu mummudalu – mummudalē
yeṉṉalahaṅ kāra mirukkumaṭṭē yāṉketṭṭut
taṉṉilaiyi ṉitṟa ṯralai.

Verse-split: *mum mudalai em matamum muṉkoḷḷum; 'ōr mudalē mummudalāy niṟkum', 'eṉḏṟum mum mudalum mum mudalē' eṉṉal ahaṅkāram irukkum maṭṭē; yāṉ keṭṭut taṉṉilaiyil niṯṟal talai.*

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* The names and forms are a reality to a mind ridden with the ego-sense. In the state of experience of the Self, for a *mukta*, these are not real. This truth has been vouchsafed in the 5th verse of *Aruṇāchala Ashṭakam* by Bhagavan.

Import: All faiths postulate the existence of three objects. The views that 'one Reality indeed appears as threefold', and that 'the three are forever three distinct entities' are held on to only while the *ahaṅkāra* or the ego persists. But to abide firmly established in one's own Real Nature (State) with the 'I' (I am the body sense) totally annihilated is the highest state.

Commentary: All religions declare at the first instance three entities namely, the individual soul (the *jīvā*), God and the world. The genesis of all the religious differences lies only in the question whether the three are one or separate and distinct entities. That the three are the appearances of a sole entity and that the three are three distinct truths are the two discordant strains of this speculative assertion. Whatever be the postulate espoused by a protagonist, it is evident that his ignorance or *ajñāna* – the false notion that the body is the Self – has not subsided. An assertion of any kind springs from the ego-sense. Only one possessed of the ego-sense becomes a hardened advocate of any doctrine or dogma. As long as the ego-sense holds the sway, so long the Truth has not become an experienced Reality and the truth of these three, at it is, will not be comprehended by him. Only in the Supreme State of *jñāna* – the State of Right Awareness – with the extirpation of the ego with the Self uncovered, everything becomes self revealed. Whatever knowledge one possesses is but mere ignorance or *ajñāna*, if the ego-sense has not been liquidated. Whatever be the religion one belongs to, be he a *Dvaitin* (dualist) or an *Advaitin* (non-dualist) the strength of conviction of one's faith and the fond attachment to its dogmas alone cannot constitute *jñāna* or Knowledge. Such knowledge, simply intellectually

comprehended or theoretically known is *Parokṣa jñāna*. But these two words *Parokṣa* and *jñāna* are the very antithesis of each other. *Jñāna* is knowing the Ātman, which is the Truth that is constantly experienced most intimately and directly, called *aparokṣa*. This being so, can knowing the Ātman, theoretically or indirectly, styled as inferential knowledge, be *jñāna* or Knowledge?

Advaitic Knowledge is just the state of Being in one's own real nature (as the real Self) and unlike other religions, it is not a dogma or faith is the verdict of Bhagavan. **Religion is the outcome of the thought process**. The knowledge of all other creeds is subject for the intellect. But *Advaita*, unlike these, becomes knowledge directly experienced, only in the Ego-less State. With the death of the ego, the mind is extinguished and the world too becomes extinct. That so long as the ego-sense lasts, the dawn of Knowledge and goal of emancipation is but a far cry, has been clarified by Bhagavan.

Whatever be the religion one belongs to, by the pursuit of the path of *sādhana* explicitly laid down by that faith, one must strive to win the actual experience of the real Self. Instead, indulging in vehement and passionate advocacy of one's own creed as the only true religion is an endeavour that is totally fruitless. Not burdening the mind with speculations on differences of various theologies but engaging oneself wholeheartedly in the pursuit of one's chosen path is the direct and right royal way. This will be revealed in what follows by and by.

Once someone handed over a religious text to Bhagavan. Bhagavan, after browsing through the book, remarked: "This text condemns (called *kaṇḍanam* in Sanskrit) all other tenets including *Advaita*. However it starts with endowing each one

of them with special praise (called *maṇḍanam* in Sanskrit). But even while extolling it, without portraying a true exposition of the creed as faithfully as it is, it deliberately inserts an element of flaw that would conveniently lend itself for condemnation later. All such disputations are just in vain. All faiths declare in one voice without exception that if the mental impurities like 'I' and 'mine' are rendered naught the sublime goal of Deliverance will claim one on Its own. There can be no second opinion on this. It is but right for people of all religions to engage themselves in this *sādhana* that is universally accepted. Must we wrangle over the nature of the sublime State – the fruit of this *sādhana* – as this or that? Should we decide upon its Nature now itself? Can we not know It when we achieve It?"

'*yāṉ keṭṭut taṉ nilaiyil niṯral talai*' (with ego-sense dissolved remaining in the Self – one's own Real Form is superior to all other states). There is nothing equal to or higher than that, is what is meant by the word *talai* (foremost).

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Exegesis: The main purport of the *upadeśa* of the venerated preceptors and of the ancient Sacred Lore that the world is *asat* (illusory or non-existent), *jaḍa* (insentient) and misery is to make us turn our minds away from the world, become inward-turned and attain the state of experience of Being the Self and be rooted in It. Instead of practising the direct path to win that state of the most intimate experience of Being the Self, one who simply reiterates that the world is *asat*, *jaḍa* and sorrowful is just on the same boat as one who argues that it is *Sat*, *Chit* and *Ānanda*, for in both cases the pursuit of the quest of the Self is being delayed inordinately.

3. ulahumeypoyt tōṯra mulahaṛivā maṇḍreṇ ḍṛulahusukha maṇḍreṇ ḍṛuraitte – ṉulahuviṭṭut taṉṉaiyōrn doṇḍṛiraṇḍu tāṉaṯru nāṉaṯra vannilaiyel lārkkumop pām.

Verse-split: *'ulahu mey,' 'poyt tōṯram,' 'ulahu aṛivu ām,' 'aṇḍṛu' eṇḍṛu, 'ulahu sukam', 'aṇḍṛu' eṇḍṛu uraittu eṉ? 'ulahu viṭṭut taṉṉai ōrndu', 'oṇḍṛu' 'iraṇḍu' tāṉ aṯru 'nāṉ' aṯra an nilai ellārkkum oppu ām.*

Import: Of what avail is it to indulge in vain disputes like 'the world is real', 'It is an illusory appearance', 'It is imbued with consciousness', 'It is inert', 'It is happiness', 'It is miserable'? The Supreme State of egolessness transcending the verbal wrangles of duality and non-duality won by turning away from the world (and plunging into the Heart) and experiencing the Self, is dear to all alike.

Commentary: The speculative arguments about the world are six in number, 'It is real; (No) It is mere illusion' are two of them. 'It is inert; (No) It is consciousness' are the next two. That, 'It is miserable; (No) It is happiness' are the final two. All these disputations can be summed up into two postulates as well – that 'the world is illusory, inert and miserable' as the first one and the other as 'it is real, awareness and happiness'. The first is the doctrine of *Advaitic Vedāntins* which is also the instruction of the sages who have experienced the Truth. This text also advocates the same truth. What is its import? Will a mere acceptance and repetition of the teaching make a disciple into one who has achieved what has to be achieved, namely, the goal of Deliverance?

The supreme or perfect happiness that we desire so eagerly cannot be obtained from the external world. Therefore renouncing the world we must strive to obtain the bliss of the Self that is within. If one fails to strive for it what does it matter how one regards the world? It is all the same, says Bhagavan.

All of us desire unalloyed perfect happiness. We have never obtained it in this world. There is no guarantee that we shall achieve it in future. The want of happiness in worldly life is due to the mental agitations caused by desire, fear, discontent and fever of activity which originate in the mind and the ego-sense is the root of the mind. Therefore unalloyed, timeless and perfect happiness is obtainable only in the Ego-less State.

Further we believe mistakenly that happiness is caused by objects and matters of the world. The worldly experience itself will prove that such an idea is rooted in mere ignorance. If objects are the cause of happiness, where they are more, the happiness must be more; less objects mean less happiness and where there are none, no happiness at all. But facts disprove this. Often we find people in penury with little worldly possessions or objects, enjoying more happiness than affluent people surrounded by endless luxuries. Further in deep sleep, where there are no objects of enjoyment, where there is nothing of the world, all alike are supremely happy. And one on waking up from sleep says, 'I slept happily', dearly recalling the happiness enjoyed in deep slumber. Therefore, it is wrong to assume that happiness resides in the objects of the external world.

What, then, is the cause or source of the happiness experienced by us? Realized sages and the *Upanishads* say

"the very nature of our Self Itself is, indeed, Bliss". If so, one may ask, 'why do we not experience it unceasingly?'. While the happiness experienced in dream and wakeful stage is fitful and meagre, in deep sleep it is uninterrupted. Hence we can justifiably conclude that in dream and wakeful states, there is an impediment to the happiness experienced by us. That stands put away in sleep. This obstacle is called 'mind' or 'ego-sense', existing both in the states of dream and wakefulness but absent in dreamless sleep. This rising of the 'I-sense' is the ego. Its form (nature) will be dwelt upon in detail subsequently.

Further the state of deep sleep, besides being sans ego, is sans world as well. Hence we may safely conclude that the world appearance is yet another obstacle to our happiness. But the world does not appear without the rising of 'I' – the ego-sense – and there is no rise of the ego-sense without the world appearance! That they both rise and fall together will be explained in another verse (Verse 7).

Thus that the world is nothing but a trifle fit to be spurned at and is never a medium of happiness but it is the Self that is of the nature of Bliss is an *upadeśa* that is in perfect accord with logical reasoning. Therefore what is to be renounced is the world; what is to be cherished is the possession of the Experience of being the Self.

There can be no second opinion on the fact that we cannot win that exalted state of Happiness of the Self without abdicating the world. Intent on winning the state of being the Ātman, we must seek it with an inward-turned, unwavering and tenaciously soul-centered mind. Inwardness and single pointedness are not feasible in the absence of the renunciation of the outward orientation of the mind. The words *ulahu*

viṭṭu (rejecting the world) mean that this act of giving up the exteriorisation of the mind is renouncing the world.

What is the use of an enquiry concerning the world which we have only to renounce? What is there in it for the aspirant to strive for? Let the world be real or otherwise. Whatever be its decisively concluded nature, as real or unreal then also it is but a trifle to be given up. That can be accomplished straightaway without going through the rigours of enquiry about the world which is but needless. Enquiring the nature of the world, fit only to be renounced, declares Bhagavan, is tantamount to scrutinizing the rubbish heap fit to be thrown out. Only the Self should interest us and not the non-Self.

But the aspirant who, by turning the mind away from the world, focuses it inwards towards the Self must be fully ripe and a competent seeker. He must be one possessed of intense devotion of a very high order towards his Real Nature (*Svarūpa*) – the Self – and with non-attachment to the world which, by concealing It, is inimical to It. Such a one can instantly pursue the quest of the Self enunciated here without embarking on an enquiry into the nature of the world. This is exemplified by the singularly divine life of Bhagavan.*

This state of Perfect Happiness obtained with ease by the best and foremost aspirants transcends the verbal wrangles about Its nature. '*oṉḏriraṇḍu tāṉaṯru*' (Its nature transcends the creeds of duality and unity) refers to this idea. The 'Ātman' cannot be christened either as One (*Advaita*) or two

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* That Bhagavan attained Wholeness and Perfection by the practice of *sādhana* seems true only in the empirical sense relating to the world. But the real truth is otherwise. Since history goes by the appearance of empirical facts, this aspect of history is cited as an example in keeping with that practice.

(*Dvaita*) because the ego that rises as 'I' is absent there. The words *nāṉ aṯra annilai* – that state devoid of the ego-sense – clearly bring out this idea.

Bhagavan affirms that all men, without exception, love this state of experience indeed and there is none who does not desire it by the use of the phrase *adu ellārkkum oppām* – that state is dear to everyone's heart. While many have not even heard of the existence of such a state, it may be queried how can it be said to be acceptable to all? Bhagavan unravels the inmost secret of this statement as follows:

Everybody loves sleep for there is unalloyed happiness in sleep. There are two characteristics common to both dreamless sleep and the Ego-less State. In both there is no rise of the ego-sense as 'I' and the world too does not appear. Sleep is pleasurable precisely because of this reason.

That the experience of the state of being the Self is in no way inferior to deep sleep is inferred from this. But the state of Being the Ātman is far superior to the state of sleep; for in sleep the mind and the ego-sense – the cause of unhappiness – subside in the darkness of nescience. The happiness of sleep is fitful and meagre. In the state of Being the Self, however, the mind, having been dissolved, has become one with the Ātman. Therefore, as there is no mind, there is no chance for the mind to resurrect itself or for the world appearance to manifest itself or for the trammels of *saṃsāra* to engulf one again. Further the bliss of the Ātman is the Perfect and Indivisible Whole. Thus we know that this state is far superior to the state of dreamless slumber. Those who love sleep cannot but desire this state and therefore to deny it would be meaningless. Hence the use of the phrase *adu ellārkkum oppām* (That state delights the hearts of all).

One who says "I love sleep; I do not desire the experience of the Self" is like one who says "I need only the nickel rupee. Do not beguile me by giving me the gold sovereign". This is the cardinal teaching of all the texts of *Advaita* Vedānta.

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Exegesis: The verses that follow emphasize the truth that the world is but a fantasy of the mind and the mind itself is unreal, so that seekers of mediocre competence and aspirants other than those foremost seekers of perfect and ideal ripeness may develop in their hearts a steady and strong devotion to the Self and dispassion towards the world after knowing full well that the world being a myth, to expect to derive constant happiness from it is ill-conceived and thereby may sever their attachment to the world. It was mentioned even earlier that the world is nothing but a mixture of names and forms. That these forms are just *māyā* and not real is the substance of the ensuing verse.

4. uruvantā ṉāyi ṉulahupara maṯṟā
muruvantā ṉaṇḏṟē luvaṯṟi – ṉuruvattaik
kaṇṇuṟudal yāvaṉevaṉ kaṇṇalāṟ kāṭciyuṇḏō
kaṇṇadutā ṉantamilāk kaṇ.

Verse-split: *uruvam tāṉ āyiṉ, ulahu param aṯru ām; uruvam tāṉ aṇḏṟēl, uvaṯriṉ uruvattai kaṇṇuṟudal yāvaṉ? evaṉ? kaṇ alāl kāṭci uṇḏō? kaṇ adu tāṉ antam ilāk kaṇ.*

Import: If the Self (Ātman) be the form of *deha* (body), the world and God may also have forms. But if the Self, in truth, be formless, then by whom and how are the forms of world and God to be seen? Can what is

seen (the spectacle) ever be of a nature different from that of the eyes that behold it? [That is, by the logic 'as is the nature of the perceiving eye, so is the appearance of what is perceived', to the *ajñānis* (with the idea of the body being the Self) the world appears to be full of forms and as other than oneself. Besides, it is natural for such to consider that God also has a form and so to possess a desire to see Him. This does not mean that these forms are real.] The real Eye is just the real Self that shines as the Eye of Infinite Consciousness and without a second and shines all by Itself (which means, in the experience of Being the Self, there are no forms. Therefore It is worldless).

Commentary: The Question *kaṇ alāl kāṭci uṇḍō?* (Is the spectacle other than the perceiving eyes?) lends itself for an interpretation other than the one above mentioned: "There is no object of perception other than the truth of the perceiver". The spectacle of the world appears only when the perceiver, the *jīvā*, appears. [Forms appear only because of the ego-sense, the primary ignorance]. In the experience of the Transcendental State, the Self alone is and there is neither *jīvā* nor the world (as the Self is Formless, Being, Infinite, Pure Consciousness, It does not see forms).

An *ajñāni* or an ignorant person is one who regards the Self as the body alone. Here 'the body' refers to both the gross and the subtle bodies. The subtle body is just the mind. The one who considers the Self as the mind is equally an *ajñāni* for both the bodies are indeed just forms.

An *ajñāni* first identifies his own Self with the form of his body and simultaneously he perceives other forms. A

conglomerate of all these forms he calls the 'world'. That body and all other forms are perceived by the 'eye of flesh', a part of the gross body. That 'eye' is just a gross form and as per the logical dictum pointed out by Bhagavan 'as is the nature of the eye so is the nature of the spectacle', the physical eye that perceives, and the objects so perceived, are all forms.

This eye shines by the power of vision of another eye namely, the mind, which still has a form, though subtle. Hence all forms cognized by the eye of mind are subtle as well.

The mind has no power of vision or light of its own. It shines lit up by the Awareness-light of the Self. Therefore the real Eye is the Self. It is the Eye of Pure and Infinite Awareness. This is explained in the 22nd verse of this Text *matikku oḷi tandu* – the Self lending light to the mind. The Self being Infinite, and therefore, formless, is the real Eye. Hence It does not 'see' forms and there is no spectacle to be perceived by It. Dualities and distinctions appear only in the wake of forms. In the Supreme State of the Experience of Being the Whole and Formless Self, there are neither forms nor dualities. The Non-dual Content is the Self; It is without a second. When we remain as the Pure Self by the pursuit of the *sādhana* of the quest of the Self, to be delineated by and by, that results in the complete and final extinction of the mind and ego-sense what survives is just the Self, Alone, Formless and Worldless. That Self is described here as the 'Infinite Eye'.

Thus it is conclusively declared that all gross and subtle forms are mental creations invested with an illusion of reality and externality having, in truth, no reality in them.

The Pure Self, the Brahman – the Reality – is projected by us as God. Brahman is called "The Beyond" or the "Content of Transcendence" – '*param*' and we call God – *paran* (The Absolute). Yet, as He is conceived as different from and other than us, due to the ego-sense, we invest Him also with a Form. This is nothing but a projection of the mental imagination, a mere illusion. Various forms are ascribed to the Lord depending upon the diverse dispositions of the mind. But all of them are illusory and unreal. Any form of Divinity is not anything other than the sole Reality – the Self – Nameless and Formless. As long as we conceive the Self as a form so long are we led to regard Him with a Form by the same logic mentioned earlier (The nature of the seen depends on the nature of the seer). In the State of the Experience of Being the Self, the world forms – along with the mentally fabricated forms of the Divinity – becoming unreal and the mind that fabricates them itself becoming extinct, the Real Self alone survives and that Self is the Truth of the Lord. This fact has been impressed on devotees with great emphasis and clarity on many an occasion by Bhagavan.

Until the ignorance or the ego-sense of confounding the Self with the body is dispelled, the Absolute cannot but be conceived as with forms. Nevertheless even such misguided awareness, asserts Bhagavan, results in positive good, for the devotees are still enabled to worship the Absolute!

But there are people who argue that since the Lord has no form in reality, is not worshipping Him in a form or idol, improper and an offence? That some antagonists, unaware of the truth of the dictum "As is the nature of the eye, so is the nature of perception", so abundantly revealed by Bhagavan,

indulge in loose talk by vehemently condemning 'idol worship'. The following conversation reveals it clearly.

Some gentlemen, followers of the Mohammedan faith, came to Bhagavan with a view to confront him with arguments. They wanted to establish in the presence of Bhagavan their view that worshipping the Lord in a form is improper. The dialogue that ensued was as under:

Questioner: Has God any form?

Bhagavan: Who says that God has a form?

Questioner: Well, if God has no form, is it not wrong to worship Him in an idol?

Bhagavan: Let us leave God alone; (He is unknown). What about you? Tell me, if you have a form or not!

Questioner: Yes! I have a form. (Pointing to his body,) I am 'this' and so and so.

Bhagavan: What! Are you this body which is about three and half cubits in height, dark in complexion, mustached and bearded?

Questioner: Yes, certainly.

Bhagavan: Then do you find yourself so in deep sleep?

Questioner: Of course! After waking up from sleep I remain thus. Therefore I must have remained so in sleep as well.

Bhagavan: Also when the body dies?

Questioner: Yes, of course.

Bhagavan: If so, when the near and dear ones come to take away the body out of the house for burial, will the body

say, "This house is mine; I will remain here itself; you should not take me out to bury me"?

Only then did reason dawn on the disputant. Baffled, he realized that he had got himself entangled unwittingly in an absurd argument. He exclaimed then: "I was wrong. I am not this body; I am the life that dwells in it". Bhagavan then interjected, "So you see all along you seriously believed that this body is yourself. This is the basic or primal ignorance from which all other forms of ignorance inevitably flow. So long as the primal ignorance remains the others will remain and it does not matter much whether you regard God as with form or formless. Once this basic ignorance is rooted out then with it all else will become sundered".

Further it is wrong and untenable on the part of one with *dehātma bhāva* (the sense of body being the Self) to presume that he meditates on a formless God. The true form of God is the formless Self, the sole Reality. He can never become an object or content of meditation. The one who does try to meditate on the Formless God bestows on Him a subtle form imagined by him and contemplates that. Practice of the meditation on the formless is well nigh an impossibility. Nonetheless giving up the meditation on a form considering it to be inferior to that on the formless is inadvisable. A gentleman once asked Bhagavan, "Meditation on a form is inferior, but meditation on the Formless is just not possible for me. What can I do?" Bhagavan reassured him saying, "Who asked you to enquire what is superior and inferior? By meditation on form one can attain realization of the Formless."

In the course of the conversation with the Moslem gentlemen, the question whether God has a form led to

the question whether the questioner, who so questions, has a form. In the same way, whatever be the question posed, the question that lurks in it, namely 'What is the truth of the questioner' would immediately spring up. This counter question that remains concealed in all the questions has the nature and form of the quest of the Self – *Ātma Vicāra* – by which one can know and experience the Truth of one's own Self. That the grasp of any truth will be beyond one who is incapable of so realizing his own Truth will be made clear subsequently. The answer to every question that springs up is: "Find out who you, who asks the question, are". If this is found out, the question along with the one who so questions will cease once and for all.

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Exegesis: Since the world appears only in the nescience of taking the body as the Self, the truth that "the world is not other than the body and the world is only as much 'real' as the body is", forms the substance of the succeeding verse.

5. uḍalpañca kōśa vuruvadaṉā laindu
muḍaleṉṉuñ colli loḍuṅgu – muḍalaṉḏṟi
yuṇḍō vulaha muḍalviṭ ṭulahattaik
kaṇḍā ruḷarō kazhaṟu.

Verse-split: *uḍal pañca kōśa uru; adaṉāl aindum uḍal eṉṉum collil oḍuṅgum. uḍal aṉḏṟi uṇḍō ulaham? uḍal viṭṭu, ulahattai kaṇḍār uḷarō? kazhaṟu.*

Import: The body is just a form that comprises of five sheaths. Therefore all the five sheaths together answer to the name of the 'body'. Can the world, in truth,

exist apart from the body? Has the world appearance been perceived by anyone without a body?

Commentary: The truth declared here is made explicit in the latter half of this verse. Various are the worlds. Dream-world, world of the wakeful state, heaven, hell; many such are said to be existent. Whatever be the world, the perceiver of that world will see himself as well to be a body in that perceived world. Thus body and world are inseparable co-appearances. Hence the very first verse of this Chapter declared that the seer is a part of the spectacle of the world perceived. That perception of the world without an embodiment is an impossibility is an experienced truth and the common knowledge of all.

The objection commonly raised is that though being bodiless in dreams – for the dreamer's body lies inert on the bed – still the dream world, a world of variety, similar to the waking world, is seen. The very first part of this verse refutes this objection by revealing the fact that the term "body" does not merely mean the gross body or the body of flesh, but comprises others of fine nature like the subtle and the causal as well. *Vedāntins* say that the body comprises of five sheaths (that cover and conceal the indwelling Self) namely, the *Annamaya* or food sheath, *Prāṇamaya* or the vital air sheath, *Manomaya* or the mental sheath, *Vijñānamaya* or the intellectual sheath and *Ānandamaya* or the sheath of *ajñāna*. Even if anyone of these five sheaths remains, there is a body and a world corresponding to that sheath will be seen. Only in the experience of the Ego-less State or the State of Being the Self, unblurred by the covering sheaths when all of which fall off, the world will not appear. That the body is not the Self or Ātman and the world is perceived only in *ajñāna*

are the clear conclusions arrived at. Since the only proof of the reality of the world is the 'perception' of the world, it is deemed as insufficient testimony to uphold the view that the world is real.

The *Annamaya kośa* – the food sheath – is just one of flesh and derives its name from the fact of it being made up of food (*annam*). The *Prāṇamaya kośa* or vital air sheath that is in between food sheath and *Manomaya kośa* (mental sheath) connects these two with each other. This *Prāṇamaya kośa* manifests breath and is the seat of the instruments of action called *karmendriyas*. The third *Manomaya kośa* – the mental sheath – is the sheath of *sankalpas* (resolutions), *vikalpas* (indecisions), and of *vāsanās* (latencies) of desires. *Vijñānamaya kośa* is the field of play of the *jñānendriyas* or the instruments of cognition, intellect and the ego-sense. *Ānandamaya kośa* is the sheath of nescience or *ajñāna*. When all the other four subside in sleep this alone remains. As sleep is blissful it is called *Ānandamaya*. Since this alone is left over in sleep, on waking up, the ego-sense and all the others arise and the bondage of *saṃsāra* is experienced. In the *Ānandamaya śarīra* (the body), the ego-sense along with others subsides as a seed in the most subtle form during sleep and impelled by the strength of *karmas* (actions, the fruits of which are yet to be undergone) and *vāsanās* sprouts up again on waking up. No one, though enjoying bliss in sleep where only the *Ānandamaya* sheath – the most subtle – is left over, gains *mukti* of the Ego-less State of Being Pure Awareness – the Self. Hence even while awake one must root out the ego-sense residing in the *vijñānamaya kośa* (the intellectual sheath) through the *sādhana* of *Ātma Vicāra* – the quest of the Self – and get straightaway established in the state of Deliverance.

The three states, dream, sleep and wakeful one, keep alternating in nescience in all of which anyone or more sheaths will veil the Self and limit It. The Ego-less State of Being the Self, that is rid of all the sheaths, is called *Turīya*, meaning the fourth state, that negates all the three states. That this state alone, indeed, is the Supreme Truth and that the other three, dreamlike in substance occurring in the sleep of ignorance are sheer myths is revealed by Bhagavan in the 32nd verse of the Supplementary Verses.

This is the only context wherein Bhagavan speaks of the *kośas* or sheaths. *Vedāntins* classify these five sheaths into three bodies, namely, the gross (the body of flesh), the subtle (the one of mind) and causal (the one of nescience or ignorance). Of these the first, the gross body, is the same as *Annamaya* sheath and the third, the causal body, is the same as *Ānandamaya* sheath (that of nescience). The second, the subtle body comprises of all the other three sheaths in between, namely, *Prāṇamaya* or vital air sheath, *Manomaya* or the mental sheath and the *Vijñānamaya kośa* or the intellectual sheath. Bhagavan, in a subsequent verse, dwells at length on this subtle body. If one, while alive and in a body, attains the state of Deliverance and gets established in *Sahaja* state by the experience of Being the Ego-less Self, by virtue of his causal body being sundered, all the three bodies are deemed to have become extinct altogether. Therefore, it is not correct to speak of him as 'still existing in a body' in the world. His gross and subtle bodies may appear to continue to exist but this is merely from the standpoint of the perception of the ill-informed onlookers. This gives rise to a volley of questions demanding convincing answers which are provided later.

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Exegesis: The two verses that follow dwell at length on the initial content of the first statement of the introductory verse namely *uḷḷadaladu uḷḷa uṇarvu uḷḷadō*? (Is there a feeling of existence except for that which exists?) Bhagavan in this verse starting with *ulahaim pulaṉgaḷuru* (the world is but the form of objects of the five senses) proves how the world is contained within the mind.

6. ulahaim pulaṉga ḷuruvēṟaṉ ḏṟavvaim pulaṉaim poṟikkup pulaṉā – mulahaimaṉa moṉḏṟaim poṟivāyā lōrndiḍuda lāṉmaṉattai yaṉḏṟiyula huṇḍō vaṟai.

Verse-split: *ulahu aimpulaṉgaḷ uru, vēṟu aṉḏṟu; av aim pulaṉ aim poṟikkup pulaṉ ām, ulahai maṉam oṉḏṟu aim poṟivāyāl ōrndiḍudalāl, maṉattai aṉḏṟi ulahu uṇḍō? aṟai.*

Import: The world is the totality of the five kinds of sensations and nothing else. These five are the subject matter for (or objects of) the five sense organs. Since the one mind becomes aware of these five sensations through the five sense organs, is there a world but for the mind? Tell me.

Commentary: The perceiver of the world, the *jīvā*, remaining as the mind within the body which is in the world, erroneously thinks that he perceives the world 'outside' of him (outside his body).

Bhagavan forcefully draws our attention to the basic misconception that underlies all these assumptions and reveals the stark Truth. The *jīvā*, identifying himself with the mind as the perceiver, perceives the world in the form of a host of sensations, namely sounds, contacts, forms,

tastes and smells. Apart from these the world is not. What the *jīvā* (accustomed always to the thought of the world existing outside, having taken the body as the Self) assumes wrongly is that the objects – the cause of these sensations – are 'outside'. The presence of these objects revealed through the respective sense organs (the gateways to contact with the world) is but part of the mind made known to the mind. But this conjecture arrived at by the mind is simply not the proven truth. The mere contention that the objects of the world are real – for they are directly perceived and experienced – cannot be evidence conclusive enough to prove their reality, aver all the philosophical thinkers in unison. The onus of proving that the objects that cause these sensations are real lies on those who avow the objective reality of the world. Further as the objects are said to be 'outside', they must further prove whether there is an 'outside' at all.

But the tenor of the reply should not be on the lines of "what more solid evidence can be required than the fact of the direct perception (of the objects of the world) by the eyes and their being experienced" to prove their reality. The eye that perceives is within the body; that body is also seen by the very same eyes; the body is part of the world and hence eyes also are not other than a part of the world, the reality of which is under dispute. Hence the evidence provided by the perceiving eye cannot support the case for establishing the reality of the world. As queried *uḍal aṉḏṟi uṇḍō ulaham*? – does the world exist apart from the body? – the body and the world both are one and the same, the reality of which is sorely suspect. Of the two, which would prove the truth of the other? (the evidence or deposition or witness of an accused cannot be sustained).

Further Bhagavan has made it clear, even earlier, that an object, if real, will not have a discontinuous appearance by rising and subsiding subsequently, which fact he reemphasizes in the succeeding verse as well. The unreality of the world becomes a foregone conclusion by the proof provided in these two verses.

The responsibility to prove the reality of the world with unassailable and convincing evidence lies on those who argue that the world is real. Those who refute it are not called upon to substantiate their stand by marshalling evidence as proof.

Let us scrutinize the supportive evidences provided by those who swear by the reality of the world. This verse simply asserts that the world is just the form of mind – an entity imagined and projected by the mind. Appearing when the mind functions and disappearing when the mind ceases to function and becomes extinct, what else is the world if not just a mental creation? queries Bhagavan. But if the fact that the world is a form created by mind is refuted, then it should continue to shine in deep sleep when the mind ceases to function and also in the state of *Turīya*. That it does not shine in these two states is a fact borne out by laymen and by sages established in the state of *Turīya*.

It may be countered that though the world did not shine in deep sleep due to the non-functioning of the instruments of cognition, nevertheless it did not cease to exist altogether. But even this will not hold water. The Self did not cease to exist in sleep. That Self, the Eye of the mind, which in turn is the eye of the eyes of flesh, is the very form of Awareness. That Eye of Awareness, by which the mind itself becomes as if it is imbued with consciousness, is the Self. This

Awareness – being the very nature of the Self – is never lost but shines unceasingly and constantly. Hence the *Upanishads* speak of Ātman being in no need of any medium or instruments of cognition. If an explanation is sought as to why the world does not shine in sleep and in *Turīya*, the answer can only be that since it is just an imagination of a fictitious mind it does not shine. That Ātman is indeed the Self-Effulgent Awareness is lucidly proclaimed by the last sentence of the next verse *tōṉḏṟi maṟaiyādoḷirum pūṉḏṟamām aḵdē* (That whole and perfect Truth which shines without rising and setting).

Some sectarians argue that the world does indeed shine unceasingly and therefore is real. Someone once asked Bhagavan, "How can I say the world is naught when I sleep? Those who are awake when I sleep do perceive the world. So the world is being seen all the time by someone or the other. Will I be wrong if I conclude on the continuous existence of the world on the basis of their statements?". Bhagavan retorted, "Did you perceive them even while you were asleep?". In other words, the doubt that the world may be just a mental fiction since it did not shine in sleep cannot be allayed by the evidence of statements one hears, on waking up, from other men of the same world. Are not these men themselves, their statements and all else just part and parcel of the same world the reality of which is suspect and subject to dispute? The question that springs up next is: are they (who vouchsafe the reality of the world to the one who has woken up from sleep) real or simply imaginations of the mind? Until a more convincing answer is provided how can they be unimpeachable witnesses?

Just as sleep is characterized by the absence of the world, in *Turīya* – the State of the Experience of Being the

Awareness – also the world does not appear. So have we been instructed in many contexts in this Text. The axiomatic conclusion is that whatever is left over, unchanged in *Turīya*, that alone indeed is real and all else unreal.

It is clear from this that there are no clinching evidences sufficient enough to convince that the world exists 'without'.

The Truth of the world can be explained as follows: The mind creates, on its own, the world appearance, makes it out as real and thereby deludes itself. The mind creates by thoughts the world and destroys it by the mere act of 'forgetting'.

But the mind is not aware that it possesses such a power to thus create and destroy. A deluded awareness is the cause of the indulgence in the function of creation by which it itself is beguiled.

It is the very nature of the mind to create and to endow a semblance of reality to all it creates and subject itself to self-deception by its own creations. This power is amply evidenced in dreams, day-dreaming, well scripted and executed plays and fictions that create an illusion of reality which the mind believes in and allows itself to be duped by it. In the same way, even the world spectacle, as we perceive it, is but a fantasy of the mind, is a valid argument worthy of acceptance and is also in agreement with the instructions of the sages.

While a dream world is realized as unreal on waking up, why the world of the wakeful stage never stands proved unreal, is the next doubt that pops up. But a fitting reply is provided by the *Vedāntic* Texts and by Bhagavan in *Arunachala Ashtakam*. Just as sleep provides the basis for a dream, the long sleep of *ajñāna* – ignorance – is the basis

for this seemingly 'real' world. In the prolonged sleep of nescience the dream of this wakeful life occurs. When the spell of this sleep of *ajñāna* is broken by the dawn of *jñāna*, the mere dream of this apparently 'real' wakeful world will also stand proved unreal. This counter argument provided here is in perfect harmony with the teachings of Bhagavan. Hence wakeful life is only as much 'real' as a dream.

Further the fact that the various supports for the illusory appearance of the world phenomenon namely, distinctions such as within (inside) or without (outside), space, time – are all unreal distinctions will be expounded in the subsequent verses.

That all distinctions accepted as 'real' by the ignorant ones are mere illusions is revealed by the process in which the principle of the Self was imparted by Sage Ribhu to his disciple Nidhaga, detailed in *Śiva Rahasya*. Nidhaga had been instructed on the Self many a time by his revered teacher but *vāsanās* of distinctions and attachment to actions had not left him. At last Sage Ribhu, in order to bestow that Knowledge once more as a final attempt, went in disguise and sought him out in his native town. Nidhaga, on his way back home after bathing in the river stood aside, for a crowd had collected there. The disciple failed to recognize his guru and took him for a rustic who had come for sight-seeing.

Then Ribhu asked Nidhaga, "Why are you standing aside?" Nidhaga replied, "The King of this place is going in a procession. There is a swelling crowd, hence I am standing aside."

Ribhu: Who in this procession, is the King?

Nidhaga: The one who is seated on the elephant.

Ribhu: Which is the elephant and who is the King?

Nidhaga: The one that is 'above' is the King and the one that is 'below' is the elephant.

Ribhu: Please explain this to me more clearly.

Then Nidhaga got upon the shoulders of Ribhu and said, "Look here, as I am 'above' you, the King is above and you are 'below' like the elephant". Then sage Ribhu retorted, "If as you say you are above like the King and I am below like the elephant, pray make me understand what you mean by 'I' and 'you'." A startled Nidhaga instantly recognized the visitor as his own preceptor, the wise sage Ribhu. He at once jumped down in haste and fell at Ribhu's feet and confessed, "Surely thou art my holy Master Ribhu. Who else has such an unfailing awareness of the profound Truth of *Advaita*?" Saying that "that was the teaching Nidhaga required", Ribhu went his way.

By this, that the primal nescience of fondly looking upon the body as the Self is the root cause of all differences can clearly be evidenced.

The final and conclusive truth of the world will be declared at the end of this chapter on "Discrimination".

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Exegesis: 'The world is contained in the mind' is the content of the preceding verse. If so "Is the mind real?" is the next question. If it be real, it may be argued that the world that appears in it must also be real; otherwise the unreality of the world stands proved beyond doubt.

7. ulahaṟivu moṉḏṟā yudittoḍuṁgu mēṉu mulahaṟivu taṉṉā loḷiru – mulahaṟivu tōṉḏṟimaṟai daṟkiḍaṉāyt tōṉḏṟimaṟai yādoḷirum pūṉḏṟamā maḵdē poruḷ.

Verse-split: *ulahu aṟivum oṉḏṟāy udittu oḍuṁgumēṉum ulahu aṟivu taṉṉāl oḷirum. ulahu aṟivu tōṉḏṟi maṟaidaṟku iḍaṉāy, tōṉḏṟi maṟaiyādu oḷirum pūṉḏṟamām aḵdē poruḷ.*

Import: The two, the world and the mind, arise and set together simultaneously; but the world is lit up by the mind alone. That alone is the Eternal Perfect and Whole Truth in which the world and mind rise and set but which Itself shines with neither a rising nor a setting.

Commentary: The second line of this verse *Ulahu aṟivu taṉṉāl oḷirum* (the world shines by the light of the mind) refers to the content of the earlier verse which means the world is contained in the mind. The words that follow *ulahaṟivu* (world awareness or world and awareness) may also be taken to mean "the awareness that expands as the form of the world". Since the world is not other than the awareness of the mind, mere mention of the place of origin and subsidence of the mind that creates the world will reveal that of the world too, for the world can have no place of origin and subsidence other than that of the mind.

This, coupled with the earlier verse bespeaks of the unreality of everything, namely, mind and the world that appears in it except the Self. What was pronounced as the characteristic of *uḷḷadu* (That which is) in the first verse, in the commentary provided by Bhagavan is reiterated here.

The Substratum – the *Satvastu* (That Which Exists) – the place for the rise and subsidence of the mind and the world, without Itself rising and setting, is shining forever and That alone is the Truth implying thereby that the world and mind subject to appearance and disappearance are illusory.

It is further clear that since both world and mind rise and set together, they in truth, are just one. Knowledge never remains pure without the admixture of the world appearance. The world is not cognized but for the awareness of the mind. It is evident that both are the expanded manifestations of something else which is the ego-sense. Its nature is explained later.

Brahman alone is the *Satvastu* – the Substratum – which is Self-Effulgent and unlike the world is not made aware by something else. Unlike the mind It is unaccompanied by the world-appearance. It is Immaculately Pure. There is no Truth other than That and the word *pūṉḏṟam* (Perfect Whole) reveals it.

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Exegesis: In the succeeding verse Bhagavan stresses the truth that though *uḷḷadu* – that *Satvastu* – is in fact bereft of names and forms, ascribing a name and form to that nameless and formless *Vastu* and worshipping It as the Lord may be a means to win the experience of the Self – the Content Beyond. Nevertheless the Experience of Being the Self alone is the true worship and vision of the Lord and in no other way can a vision of Him be had.

8. eppeyariṭ ṭevvuruvi lēttiṉumār pēruruvi lapporuḷaik kāṇvazhiya dāyiṉumam – meypporuḷi ṉuṇmaiyiṯṟa ṉuṇmaiyiṉai yōrndoḍuṅgi yoṉḏṟudalē yuṇmaiyiṟ kāṇa luṇar.

Verse-split: *eppeyar iṭṭu, evvuruvil, ēttiṉum, ār pēr uru il ap poruḷaik kāṇ vazhi adu, āyiṉum, am meyp poruḷiṉ uṇmaiyil taṉ uṇmaiyiṉai ōrndu oḍuṅgi, oṉḏṟudalē uṇmaiyil kāṇal, uṇar.*

Import: The *upāsana* or worship of that nameless and formless Perfect Content – the Reality – by any name and in any form is verily a means to gain a vision of that *Satvastu*; albeit the true vision consists in realizing that the Truth of that *uḷḷadu* is the truth of oneself and merging with 'That' (with the mind extinguished) and remaining as 'That' indistinguishably.

Commentary: *Jīvā*, God and the world are mere projections of imagined mental concepts. In deep slumber, characterized by the absence of mind, they cease to exist. Hence the Self – the form of *Sat-Chit-Ānanda* – is the sole verity. Yet ensnared by the *māyā* of the mind, out of nescience, mistaking oneself as a separate individual (*jīvā*) and consequently continuously being whirled round mounted on the transmigratory wheel of *saṃsāra*, a *jīvā* cannot but think of the Creator, the Lord of the worlds and the *jīvās*. As long as the *jīvā* believes in the reality of his individuality, the Lord or God is also real who, in truth, is none other than that Non-dual Content – the very form of *Sat-Chit* – the Self. The Real Self, that *uḷḷadu*, out of his ignorance has become the 'other' of him or 'alien to him' which he calls 'God'. Thus he has self-exiled himself from his real Truth – the

Self. An ignorant devotee ascribes names and forms to that Real Content, regards Him as other than or different from him and worships Him as the Lord of all, the Compassion incarnate. This is but logical and proper as was mentioned earlier. Such devotional worship fructifies by landing one in the experience of the Self by endowing him with strength of mind and discrimination – the prerequisites to win that Ego-less State, so does Bhagavan assert. This is the Content of the statement *ār pēr uru il ap poruḷaik kāṇ vazhi adu* (That is the way to see that nameless formless Content). Assigning names and forms to that Real Content and worshipping It in that name and form is a sure way, assures Bhagavan, to negate the bondage caused by those very names and forms.

Since mention here is made of *eppeyariṭṭu evvuruvil* (in whatever form and by whatever name), it is evident that Brahman can be worshipped in any form and by any name like Vishnu or Śiva, that is dear to one's heart. That the Lord accepts out of His Infinite Compassion whatever names and forms the devotees ascribe to Him in all devotion, is but meet and logical. Though names and forms attributed to the Absolute are many, yet the essence that runs through them is One. Hence viewing the core or essence that runs through equally in the worship of the Absolute couched in a multitude of names and forms is called *samarasa* (Essence equally existent). It is the height of non-discrimination to quarrel over the superiority of 'my God' over 'your God'.

The form chosen for worship may be the one projected by the imagination of the mind; or the Absolute can be invoked in an external form or idol and offered worship. The Sun, the ether, fire, mountain, river or any other manifestation of Nature can be worshipped as His Form. But of all forms that

are so worshipped the most sublime is the form of a Guru or an *Ātmajñāni*, a realized sage, who does not regard himself as other than that Absolute or as a body. Therefore it is that Lord Krishna declares in the *Gītā*, "the *jñāni* is verily Myself". It is but proper that we should perceive the Guru who is a *jñāni* as he sees himself and be aware of him in the same way he is aware of himself – not as a body but as an embodiment of Awareness.

It is highly improper to regard him as different from that Transcendent Content – Brahman – and an aspirant who regards so will never gain the Knowledge of the Self.

The devout one, unaware that realizing the Supreme Self is the *summum bonum* of all spiritual experiences, desires to have a vision of that Lord in that very name and form he has chosen to worship. He may even obtain the vision that he so desires by the sheer strength of his *upāsana* or worship. But the vision that appears is subject to disappearance and will not remain forever. The Lord, in reality, is not other than the Self seated in the heart and visions are mere thought forms of the mind-stuff and therefore not real. A verse that follows dwells on this truth at length.

A devotee will ultimately reach the land of the Self even if he desires not the Experience of Being the Self, by virtue of the Grace of the Lord. Grace is nothing but Brahman, called the Lord God, seated as Self in the Heart.

The Experience of Being the Self, providing everlasting contentment, is indeed the true vision of the Lord, the Content Beyond. This idea is explicit in the statement *am meyp poruḷiṉ uṇmaiyil taṉ uṇmaiyiṉai ōrndu oḍuṅgi, oṉḏrudalē uṇmaiyil kāṇal* (True vision of Him consists in being at one with Him by merging in Him, the Transcendental Being,

through the realization of the identity of the Real Self with His real Essence). The same trend of thought is pursued in a few verses towards the end of the chapter.

Bhagavan often used to narrate the story of Prahlada from *Jñāna Vāsiṣṭham* to illustrate the truth that this verse espouses.*

Hiranya Kasipu, the father of Prahlada, conquered all the (three) worlds, became invincible and ruled over his empire with none equal to or to challenge him. Prahlada was therefore fearless. When his father was killed by Lord Vishnu, Prahlada thought that he may also be killed by the Lord. He, seized with fear of death and to get rid of it, surrendered to the same Lord Vishnu and worshipped Him devoutly with *pūjā*, *japa* and *dhyāna* to obtain His Grace. The Lord appeared before him in a form and said, "This vision in itself will not suffice to acquire deathlessness. You must have *darśan* (vision) of that Lord Vishnu, the Self, seated within your Heart" and disappeared after detailing to him the nature of the practice to be followed. Prahlada, following these instructions faithfully, attained the Experience of Being the Self and therefore immortality and thus overcame the fear of death.

This verse is a strong corroboration of the truth that *uḷḷadu* – Brahman – is not other than the 'Self' seated in the Heart.

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Exegesis: The *jīvā* and God spoken of here constitute a pair – a dyad. A dyad is one where the two constituents are opposed diametrically to each other. Like light and darkness,

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* The story of Prahlada as narrated in *Vāsiṣṭham* is different from what is described in *Bhāgavatam* and other *Purāṇas*.

the Lord – All-knowing with Infinite Awareness – and the finite *jīvā* – with a little awareness – are poles apart differing on other grounds as well. Like other pairs of opposites *jñāna* and *ajñāna*, good and bad, happiness and misery, inside and outside, Lord and *jīvā* is another duality. The world becomes differentiated and fragmented on account of these dyads which are too numerous to list out. The triads that add to the fragmentations that the world stands dissected into are equally numberless. A triad or *triputi* consists of three objects. In the instance of a devotee having a *darśan* (vision) of the Lord three objects distinct from each other appear namely the perceiver, the object of perception and the process of cognition. An enquiry into the reality of these distinctions is worth undertaking. If they are proved unreal, the conviction that the world is unreal becomes firm and strong. This forms the content of the ensuing verse.

9. iraṭṭaikaṇ muppuḍika ḷeṉḏṟumoṉḏṟu paṯṟi yiruppavā mavvoṉḏṟē teṉḏṟu – karuttiṉuṭ kaṇḍāṟ kazhalumavai kaṇḍava rēyuṇmai kaṇḍār kalaṅgārē kāṇ.

Verse-split: *iraṭṭaikaḷ muppuḍikaḷ, eṉḏṟum oṉḏṟupaṯṟi iruppavām; av oṉḏṟu ēdu eṉḏṟu karuttiṉuḷ kaṇḍāl kazhalum avai; kaṇḍavarē uṇmai kaṇḍār; kalaṅgārē, kāṇ.*

Import: All dyads and triads, always arise holding on to the one – basic ego-sense. Enquiring into the truth of this ego-sense, if one enters the Heart and perceives the truth, then all dyads and triads slip away. Those who have so perceived are the ones who have truly seen the Self – the *Satvastu*. Such men of discernment will never again be agitated by these dyads and triads.

Commentary: Dyads and triads have their origin in the mind. Dyads are an inseparable pair, for when one constituent of the dyad appears, invariably it is accompanied by the other of the pair. Similarly when one element of the triad arises, in its wake, appear the other two along with and when they go out of existence, the two of the pair and the three of the triad all vanish together. There are neither dyads nor triads in deep sleep where the mind has subsided thereby making it abundantly clear that all these are just thought-forms of the mind. The ego-sense that rises as 'I' is the source or basis of all these thoughts. This ego-sense as is revealed in verse 25 of this Text rises holding on to the form of a body as 'I'. This ego or ego-sense, which will be explained further, is the ground and basis from which the dyads and triads appear. In the phrase *oṉḏṟu paṯṟi iruppavām* (remain holdng on to one), '*oṉḏṟu*' (one) refers to this ego.

Verse 26 explains how this ego is the sole origin for the appearance of the world and the multiplicities in it.

The 'ego' that conceals the Ātman – That which is – from shining as It is, is the seed that sprouts into the teeming and transient pluralities and the distinctions of the phenomenal world. If it is sundered, everything else that depends on the ego for survival will also be sundered; then the Self shines in all Its spelndour without let or hindrance is the core teaching of this Text.

How to destroy this ego? The only way to ensure the extinction of the ego-self is to seek and probe its seat of origin. This forms the content of verse 27 opening with *nāṉ udiyādu uḷḷa nilai* (we are that when the ego 'I' has not arisen).

That very *sādhana* Bhagavan indicates here by the use of the words *avvoṉḏṟu ēdeṉḏṟu karuttiṉuḷ kaṇḍāl* (If one enters

the heart by the quest of I and perceives). When the truth of 'I' is sought with an inward-turned mind, the mind sinks into the Heart and subsides there and the experience of being the Self is the gift gained. The perception, that is mentioned in the words *karuttiṉuḷ kaṇḍāl* (if seen within) precisely refers to this experience. If so experienced *kazhalum avai* (they slip away and cease to bind) clearly imply that the dyads and triads flee away once for all and they do not survive in the state of *Turīya* – the State of Being the Self. In other words, they are not true from the level of the Absolute. As long as the sense of body as Self prevails so long do they appear true just as dreams appear 'real' for the dreamer while he dreams.

It is said *kaṇḍavarē uṇmai kaṇḍār* (one who sees so is the Seer of Truth or a sage) spelling out explicitly thereby that one who conquers the ego is a sage. He is one unperturbed by the world of *māyā* for the multiplicity and distinctions of the phenomenal world are not for him; they are not henceforth perceived by him. The delusion caused by dyads and triads lasts only as long as the ego-sense exists.

The various 'distinctions' mentioned here have the ego-sense as their root and base and when the Self is experienced, with the extirpation of the ego, all the expanded manifestations of the ego like the mind and the fictitious creations of the mind like dyads and triads too perish. When the mind dies there is no one who sees the world and also no world to be seen for the world too dies with it. What is left as the sole residue is the Self, the Ātman. This reemphasizes the truth that the world is unreal.

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Exegesis: Dyads and triads are thus declared to be mere mental fabrications and therefore fictitious in their totality. The pair, knowledge and ignorance, is the most important of all the dyads while the three, the knower, the knowledge and the object known, constitute the important triad. The four verses that follow, besides proving that none of them is real for they do not survive but cease to exist in the state of the experience of being the Self, expatiate upon the word *jñānam* (knowledge) that occurs in the string of words *Āṉma jñānam* (Knowledge of the Self) used here, by which the core content of this Text "The Experience of Being the Ātman – Self" is referred to.

The ensuing verse, the first of these four, clearly states that all forms of knowledge acquired by the *ajñānis* – the ignorant ones – is no knowledge but just ignorance, for ignorance of the Self is the one source of all worldly knowledge.

10. aṟiyāmai viṭṭaṟiviṉ ḏṟāmaṟivu viṭṭav
vaṟiyāmai yiṉḏṟāhu manda – vaṟivu
maṟiyā maiyumārkkeṉ ḏṟammudalān taṉṉai
yaṟiyu maṟivē yaṟivu.

Verse-split: *aṟiyāmai viṭṭu aṟivu iṉḏṟu ām; aṟivu viṭṭu av aṟiyāmai iṉḏṟu āhum; 'anda aṟivum aṟiyāmaiyum ārkku' eṉḏṟu am mudalām taṉṉai aṟiyum aṟivē aṟivu.*

Import: In the phenomenal world knowledge is never unaccompanied by ignorance; neither is ignorance ever divorced from knowledge. True knowledge is the Awareness of the original Self – as It truly is – the source of the ego-self which is the origin of all, by the start of

the quest "to whom is the ignorance and knowledge of the world of objects?".

Commentary: The terms 'knowledge' and 'ignorance' refer to the relative knowledge of the worldly phenomena. They belong to the tribe of dyads and triads that the world is teeming with. As stated in an earlier verse, they are the progeny of the parent, the 'ego'. They survive as real entities as long as the ego-sense – the primal nescience – lasts. In the state of being the Self, with the dawn of True Knowledge, the nescience of the ego is consumed and these – its off-shoots – are also rendered naught and unreal. That knowledge and ignorance of the empirical world is unreal, is the essential import.

The relative knowledge of the phenomenal world, contrary to what we presume, is no knowledge at all but sheer ignorance; the reason being that they both belong to the category of dualities both of which rise, exist and fall together being inseparable from each other. The knowledge of something known is invariably accompanied by the ignorance of other things. What is knowledge for one may well be ignorance for another. The nature of the experience of knowledge and ignorance is inconstant. Further all knowledge is admixed with the primal ignorance, namely, the ego; hence all knowledge is ignorance only and the so called knowledge and ignorance is but a two-fold ignorance. The verse subsequent to this cites two more reasons to substantiate this truth. Knowledge and ignorance arise only in the state of the ignorance of the real Self – the truth of the *jīvā* – who fondly in conceit considers himself as the 'I' while saying 'I know' and 'I do not know'. Further in the state of the experience of being the Self they cease to exist thereby proving that they both belong to the

realm of ignorance. That we may not delude ourselves by firmly believing in the existence of a substance called ignorance, verse thirteen steers us clear off this disillusionment by stating unequivocally *jñāṉamām tāṉē mey* (*jñāna* – Knowledge of Ātman – alone is real) and that nescience is something unreal that has no existence at all.

If all that is known as 'knowledge' is but ignorance, 'What then is knowledge?' is the question that next arises. The question 'to whom is the two-fold ignorance?' leads to the answer 'to me'. This triggers off the quest for the Self with the poser 'Who am I?'. A steadfast pursuit of this enquiry with the mind single-pointedly focused on enquiring into the nature of the one who says so, the 'I', the experiencer of both knowledge and ignorance, dies along with the pair, paving the way for the dawn of *jñāna*. Only this *jñāna* or knowledge that results from the death of ego is true knowledge is the answer to the question posed earlier. *mudalām taṉ* (the origin of that, namely ego) refers to this 'ego-self'. This fictitious creator is the origin of other fabricated off-shoots in its train like the world, body etc. has been explained. The experience of the Pure *Sat* – the Self, unblurred and ever Self-effulgent – gets established without any obstruction with the extinction of the ego. This is the true state of knowledge. The winning of the experience of this Natural state is certain with the elimination of the ego is further elaborated in verse 27 – *nāṉ udiyādu uḷḷa nilai* (The state of non rising of the ego as 'I' is the state where we are That).

In *aṟiyāmai viṭṭu aṟiviṉḏṟām* (there is no knowledge unblended with ignorance), '*aṟiyāmai*' or ignorance refers also to the primal ignorance of 'I am the body' sense. Therefore knowledge of the phenomenal world is only for those bereft of the knowledge of the Self and for those with knowledge of

the Self, the relative knowledge of the empirical world does not exist is the import gleaned from this.

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Exegesis: The verse that precedes declares that the knowledge of the Self alone is 'knowledge' implying thereby that knowledge of anything other than 'That' is just ignorance. This verse further elucidates that fact and makes explicit the implied import.

11. aṟivuṟun taṉṉai yaṟiyā dayalai
yaṟiva daṟiyāmai yaṉḏṟi – yaṟivō
vaṟivayaṟ kādhārat taṉṉai yaṟiya
vaṟivaṟi yāmai yaṟum.

Verse-split: *aṟivu uṟum taṉṉai aṟiyādu, ayalai aṟivadu aṟiyāmai aṉḏṟi, aṟivō? aṟivu ayaṟku ādhārat taṉṉai aṟiya aṟivu aṟiyāmai aṟum.*

Import: It is but ignorance – and not knowledge – if the knowing subject knows what appears as 'outside' of oneself (the world and objects arising in relative existence) without knowing the Truth of the Subject 'I', the seat of Awareness. When the truth of the apparently real I, the seat of knowledge and the object of knowledge, is realized in the experience of *jñāna*, the duality of knowledge and ignorance will perish.

Commentary: The *jīvā* who knows the world and the objects in it is the *Chidābhāśa* – the reflected awareness – an unreal one. (*Chit*-Awareness, *ābhāśa* – that which reflects). That it is totally an unreal entity like the appearance of a snake in a rope or the son of a barren woman was explained

much earlier. This will be dealt in detail later on. Suffice it to say for the present that this is but the very form of the ego-sense. The only method or *sādhana* to acquire *jñāna*, the state of Deliverance, is to enquire after the truth or source of the ego. As a corollary, it can safely be inferred that one who knows not his own Self through the *sādhana* of the quest of the Self is the one who is ignorant of the truth of his own Self. He wrongly presumes this *Chidābhāśa* or *jīvā* to be the Self. This is the primal nescience. Since the relative knowledge of the world – or the absence of it to be precise – has for its stay and support the ego, one who is under the sway of the nescience cannot know the world as it really is. And as such whatever he 'knows' by his intellect or senses is only contrary to the truth and all knowledge he possesses cannot but be termed ignorance.

Bhagavan was once asked, "How can the world that is directly perceived (by me and is known by my senses all the time and in so many ways) be unreal?". Bhagavan replied: "This world which you try to prove to be real is all the time mocking at you for seeking to know '*it*' without your first knowing *yourself*." Verse 18 with the opening line *ulahu uṇmai āhum* (the world is real) highlights by contradistinction the ways in which a *jñāni* and an *ajñāni* are aware of the world. The *ajñāni* perceives only the world of names and forms superimposed on the substratum – Brahman – and perceives not the Brahman and thereby gets himself entangled in bondage believing those ephemeral names and forms to be the eternal verities. The *jñāni*, on the other hand, who is ever aware, perceives only the Brahman – that substratum – alone which shines forever and everywhere. Hence he is ever free from bondage of all kinds.

The *ajñāni*, therefore, suffers from two-fold ignorance: one is the 'ignorance' of the relative knowledge of the phenomenal world and the other is the relative 'knowledge' of the world. One must be delivered of both these forms of ignorance. It is but the height of sheer ignorance to wish to be rid of one and fondly wish for the retention of the other at the same time.

The other rationale offered to prove that both are but forms of ignorance is that both go out of existence together in the Natural state of being the Self. This, indeed, is the import of the statement *aṟivu ayal ivaṯṯṟukku ādhāramāṉa taṉ uṇmaiyai aṟiya aṟivaṟiyāmai aṟum* (when the ego-self that remains as the foundation and support of the knowledge of the objective world and ignorance of it is enquired into within and the Truth of the Reality is realized, knowledge and ignorance will both be destroyed forever).

The truth that in the Natural State of remaining as the Source – the Self – these two are reduced to nullities is gleaned from this.

The word *ayal* (*ayarku*, the other) in the Text has two different connotations. One is the "other" of knowledge, namely, ignorance. What the subjective knower thinks as "the other" of him (as apart from him) namely, the known world or the universe, is the other. The *jīvā* or the ego-sense is the stay and support both of the knowing mind (the knower) and of the known objects of the world that are revealed by it as well. The Reality, the Self, when realized, reveals that "That Self" is the truth of that ego-sense too.

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Exegesis: If both knowledge and ignorance become extinct, will not mere nothingness (void) prevail after that, is very often the doubt possessed and the question posed. What survives after that is not mere *sunya* or void: The Self, which is Itself true knowledge shines all by Itself as Pure Awareness – Its very form. This is elucidated in this verse.

What is termed 'Self-Knowledge' or the state of being the Self, is the state in which there can be neither knowledge nor ignorance. That Knowledge is the very form of the Self Itself and not just Its attribute or function is explained further.

12. aṟivaṟi yāmaiyu maṯṟadaṟi vāmē
yaṟiyuma duṇmaiyaṟi vāhā – daṟitaṟ
kaṟivittaṟ kaṉṉiyamiṉ ḏṟāyavirva dāṯṟā
ṉaṟivāhum pāzhaṉ ḏṟaṟi.

Verse-split: *aṟivu aṟiyāmaiyum aṯṟadu aṟivāmē; aṟiyum adu uṇmai aṟivu āhādu; aṟidaṟku aṟivittaṟku aṉṉiyam iṉḏṟāy avirvadāl, tāṉ aṟivu āhum; pāzh aṉḏṟu; aṟi.*

Import: The State of Knowledge is a state free of both knowledge and ignorance. The knowledge of the objects of the world known as 'other' than oneself is not True knowledge or the State of Deliverance. As the Self shines all by Itself without there being anything other than the Self either (for the Self) to know or to make (the Self) known, Ātman or Self is True Knowledge. Be certain that a void, it is not.

Commentary: That the Knowledge of the Self alone is true knowledge and all else mere ignorance was explained in verse 10 itself which goes: *aṟiyāmai viṭṭu aṟivu iṉḏṟām*

(knowledge is never unaccompanied by ignorance) and reiteration here is mainly to anchor strongly and to fortify the grasp of this fact. Only in the empire of the ego, namely, the *saṃsāric* or worldly life, do *jñāna* and *ajñāna* – knowledge and ignorance – coexist. What prevails in the sovereign state of *Turīya* is simply Pure Knowledge without any admixture of ignorance. There is neither the dyad of knowledge and ignorance nor the triad of the knower, known and knowledge. That, It is totally distinctionless is the message. A knowledge that bristles with distinctions is clouded by ignorance involving the triad. That this is nothing but ignorance is the implication of the phrase *aṟiyumadu uṇmaiaṟivu āhādu* – the objective knowledge of the world is no knowledge at all.

There are even some who, in wonder, question, "will both *jñāna* (knowledge) and *ajñāna* (ignorance) go out of existence in the Supreme State of *Turīya*" and further wish, "Fine if ignorance ceases to exist, but why should knowledge also cease?". That what they call '*jñāna*' is but ignorance or knowledge of the world phenomena, has been made abundantly clear. The reason for their being non-existent in *Turīya* is that It is the State of the beatitude of Aloneness – non-dual without a second, where there is nothing other than Itself. Bhagavan explains the essence of this content in the second half of this verse by the use of terms *aṟidaṟku aṟivittaṟku, aṉṉiyamiṉḏṟāy avirvadāl* (It shines all by Itself without any other for It to know nor anything to make It known). There exists none 'other' for It to know. Hence the knowledge involving the triad is not for the Self. There is no 'other' awareness except Itself to reveal It or to make Itself known. This Truth is verily the content of the other meaning of the sentence *uḷḷadaladu uḷḷa uṇarvu uḷḷadō?* (But for the

existence of *uḷḷadu* can there be a feeling of existence?) in the very first verse of this Text. The Self, shining by Its own Light of Awareness without any other reality to shed light on It, is Self-Effulgent and therefore Self-Revealing. The truth to be deduced from the above is that the Self is not insentient. Since It is not insentient It leaves no room for ignorance. Hence the Self – free of both knowledge and ignorance – is the whole Perfect Content.

Herein the *Upanishadic* dictum that the Self shines by Its own Light that is verily the form of awareness is upheld by the terms *tāṉ aṟivu āhum* – Self is by Itself True Knowledge.

The very Awareness of Its form of Awareness is "what is" – *uḷḷadu*. Those who are ignorant of the fact that all appearances of the world phenomena which have as their substratum *uḷḷadu* are unreal, mistakenly accuse that the Self that shines in all Its Aloneness is but a mere void. That we may not be deluded and walk into this trap of believing this, Bhagavan cautions us by refuting it and declares *pāzh aṉṉṟu aṟi* (know that the Self is not a mere void). How can That "Being" be called a void by the mere "being" of which all these (the empirical phenomena) that have no "existence" of their own appear to have existence and by the Light of Awareness of which all these are revealed?

Those who cry hoarse that the Self is void erroneously presume that the so-called eternal happiness of the celestial worlds only is worthy of being desired and striven for. Unfortunately they know not the nature of happiness. The happiness of the celestial worlds like heaven is not eternal or interminable but waxes and wanes. Besides, they can never confer the everlasting bliss of eternal satisfaction or perennial

contentment. In contrast, the Experience of Being the Self is eternal contentment bereft of any defect or deficiency and hence endless.

The real substance of the term "Self-Knowledge" will now become lucid and clear. "Knowledge of the Self" and "The Self that is Knowledge", are the two imports. In the former, the Self becomes the "object" and the knowledge that knows it is the "other" of It. It was already explained how there is no room for the appearance of triad in the Self It being a non-dual content without a second. It being the sole Reality It cannot become an object of knowledge. Therefore, as this interpretation goes contrary to the very nature of the Self it is totally unacceptable. The latter interpretation that "The Self that is Knowledge" clearly brings out the real nature of the Self which is the very form of Knowledge. This is in perfect harmony and in tune with the instruction provided in the verse namely *tāṉ aṟivāhum* (Self is Knowledge). What we should realize is that it is wrong to presume that we do not know the Self now; yet at an appropriate time in future we may know It. Being the Self, It is never unknown. "To know the Self" is "to remain as the Self". More light will be thrown on this in the 33rd verse of this Text.

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Exegesis: In this verse Bhagavan spells out in a limpid manner the established dictum of *Advaita* by way of providing answers to questions like 'What is Real?', 'What is unreal?', 'How does the unreal shine as the Real?', etc. The Self alone is the sole Truth. The world is superimposed on that Substratum and appears real partaking the reality of the Substratum is the doctrine of *Advaita*, in a nutshell.

13. jñāṉamān tāṉēmey nāṉāvā jñāṉamañ jñāṉamām poyyāmañ jñāṉamumē – jñāṉamān taṉṉaiyaṉḏṟi yiṉḏṟaṇika tāmpalavum poymeyyām poṉṉaiyaṉḏṟi yuṇḍō puhal.

Verse-split: *jñāṉam ām tāṉē mey; nāṉā ām jñāṉam ajñāṉam ām; poyyām ajñāṉamumē, jñāṉamām taṉṉai aṉḏṟi iṉḏṟu. aṇikaḷ tām palavum poy, meyyām poṉṉai aṉḏṟi uṇḍō? puhal.*

Import: The Self, the very form of Awareness, is the sole verity and nothing else is real. All else, the so-called 'knowledge', that appears as manifold, is but ignorance. This ignorance too, which is unreal having no existence of its own, is not other than the Self – the very form of *Chaitanya* – Consciousness. Know that this is just like the unreal ornaments of different shapes made of gold that cannot be other than the truth of gold – the real.

Commentary: The verse prior to this one conclusively declared towards the end *tāṉ aṟivu āhum* – the Self is Knowledge. The Self, the very form of Awareness, the sole verity – *uḷḷadu* or Brahman – shines ever the same without any distortion all by Itself is the substance of the phrase *jñāṉamām tāṉē mey* – the form of pure knowledge, the Self is, the only Reality. It follows from this that the Self is but ONE, embodying the characteristics of *Sat* and *Chit* and by virtue of being *Sat* and *Chit*, It is Brahman.

The query "Is not the world that appears manifold as the individual *jīvā*, the Lord and the world real?" is countered by the statement *nāṉāvām jñāṉam ajñāṉamām*, that the knowledge of the manifold appearance is just ignorance and

therefore unreal. 'The knowledge of the manifold' refers to the world appearances in multifarious names and forms. But for this knowledge of names and forms, which are nothing but the thoughts that arise and pass through the mind, the world is not. [In other words since the world does not exist apart from that world-form consciousness, it is unreal.]

Here the characteristic features of *Sat* (Real) and *asat* (unreal) are elaborated on. To Be and to exist just as One is the nature of *Sat* and to appear as many and varied is the basic nature of *asat*.

As the source or the origin of the world appearance with its variegated names and forms is nescience, the effect or product of this nescience, the world appearance, is nescience too. This nescience or *ajñāna* is the ego-sense. That *ajñāna* is not a substance by itself is the basic truth that is taught by Bhagavan in this text time and again. Like darkness, this ignorance does not bear the Light of Right Awareness and like darkness that is driven out of existence by light, *ajñāna* becomes extinct in the Light of the Awareness of the Self. Can that which is subject to extinction be *uḷḷadu* (That which is)? Here impermanence is the proof of unreality. It follows then that ignorance and the world, which is its offspring, are unreal and it is indicated by the phrase *poyyām ajñāṉamumē* (the false *jñāna* of the plurality is unreal).

That *ajñāna* or nescience is not something that can be said to exist is the philosophy propounded by the *Vedāntins*. If it be a real substance it would mean that the world that is born of it and the bondage caused by the worldly existence will all appear to be real. Though an uninformed seeker is often instructed on the apparently real existence of nescience as the cause of bondage, that in reality it is naught is the conclusive

teaching. Hence the question how did I get embroiled in the *ajñāna* is incongruous and absurd. The intent and purpose of this poser is to establish an association between the worldly life (*saṃsāra*) and Brahman, the very form of *Sat-Chit*. But no such relationship exists in reality. The considered conclusion of the *Upanishads* is *asaṅgo hyayaṁ puruṣah*, Brahman, the Self, is untouched by anything. This is what is called the *Ajāta Siddhānta*, the Truth of Non-becoming, which enunciates that in the Absolute level there is no creation of nescience like the world; nor anyone called the *jīvā* (the individual soul); none that is bound; none aspiring for liberation; nor bondage; nor liberation. What exists is the One, Alone, ever-Pure, ever-Aware and ever-Liberated, the Self. This is the Truth verified by the experience of being the Self by the realized sages. Bhagavan has been heard to say often that Lord Sri Krishna instructed Arjuna this established Truth in the very beginning of his *upadeśa* in the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. And as he, perplexed, struggled to comprehend and accept the teaching, the Lord had gone on to teach the rest of the Text.

Though there is no connection in reality between the two, an imagined relationship is conceived and spoken of to instruct the seekers. This, *ipso facto*, can cause no blemish to the *uḷḷadu* – the Reality.

The world, *jīvā* and *para* which are the expanded manifestations of this *ajñāna* appear real, because their substratum is Brahman, *uḷḷadu* – the True Content. It is an imaginary illusion projected on the Self, the very form of *Sat-Chit*. It becomes evident then that the world has no existence of its own apart from the existence of the Self which is Being Itself. In the state of being the Self, *Turīya*, the Self shines

in all Its Non-dual Purity bereft of the world appearance thus proving that the Self alone is the sole verity and the pluralistic world of names and forms, a mere illusion.

If the world is unreal, it follows that the imagined distinctions of names and forms superimposed on the substratum 'Self' are unreal. The truth of the world, therefore, is the substratum – Self – which alone survives after the differences of names and forms are stripped off. Viewed in this light, the two pronouncements "the world is real"; "the world is unreal" are not mutually contradictory to each other and both are true when the content is comprehended in a way compatible and do not repudiate each other.

Here the analogy of gold and ornaments wrought of gold is used. Names and forms imposed on gold are called jewels but in truth it is gold all the time. The ornaments are but gold, before they were made, while fashioned as ornaments and after they were melted out of name and form, is the stark reality. What remains unchanged all through is but gold and what changes is the nomenclature and patterns. The ornaments may be many but the gold is one. By virtue of this truth, the forms of gold being transient and impermanent are unreal while gold, compared to the ornaments is (relatively) real. Attention here must be drawn to the statement in the verse *aṇikaḷ tām palavum poy* (the many ornaments are unreal) and *meyyām poṉṉai aṉḏṟi uṇḏō* (can they exist apart from gold – the real)? wherein the words *poy mey* (unreal and real) are used in tandem to make the parallelism accurate and complete. When they are seen as gold, the ornaments will not appear; hence they are unreal. When the ornaments are seen as such, their unreal names and forms conceal the gold, their truth. The gold that gets concealed is the truth or

reality. The people of the world may claim and say that both are real in which case the comparison will not be in accord with what is compared. Precisely for this reason Bhagavan has introduced these two words *poy, mey* (unreal, real) which make the content clear and lucid. The ornaments that are many and, therefore, unreal have as their basis the one, therefore, the real, gold. Likewise the knowledge of the world form of variety and distinctions – the very form of ignorance – is unreal, but shines as real because it has as its substratum, the Self – the very form of knowledge or Awareness – the only Reality and therefore shines as real.

These terms *mey* (real) and *poy* (unreal) have been placed here on purpose lest the wrong interpretation of Bhagavan's teaching would gain ground. But for the insertion of these words, it would be interpreted that not only ornaments of gold are true but their names and forms are equally true in the absolute sense and as per the analogy it would further be commented that the world, the form of Brahman, is real and so are the variety and distinctions equally real as well.

A verse in *Tirumantiram* by Tirumūlar speaks of the very same content:

"It is the elephant in rut that veils the wood

It is the elephant in rut that gets veiled in the wood

It is the great elements that veil the Transcendent

It is the great elements that get veiled in the Transcendent."

During the period under the sway of *ajñāna*, the Transcendent, concealed by the five elements, appears as these elements. After the dawn of enlightenment, the five elements like the world ceasing to appear, *uḷḷadu*, the Content Beyond, alone truly shines.

The analogy of snake and rope embodies the same meaning as is revealed by this simile of gold and jewels.

The forgone conclusion arrived at here is that the world that is proven unreal ultimately is non-existent even while it appears. This content is further elaborated in verse 37 *sādhakattilē duvitam.*

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Exegesis: The constituents that go to make the world are both *jaḍa* (inanimate objects) and *chetana* (living beings). Are all these unreal or the sentient beings alone are real is the doubt that surfaces next. This verse is by way of resolving that enigma.

14. taṉmaiyuṇḍēṉ muṉṉilaipa ḍarkkaika ṭāmuḷavān taṉmaiyi ṉuṇmaiyait tāṉāyndu – taṉmaiyaṟiṉ muṉṉilaipa ḍarkkai muḍivuṯroṉ ḏrāyoḷirun taṉmaiyē taṉṉilaimai tāṉ.

Verse-split: *taṉmai uṇḍēl muṉṉilai paḍarkkaikaḷ tām uḷavām; taṉmaiyiṉ uṇmaiyait tāṉ āyndu, taṉmai aṟiṉ, muṉṉilai paḍarkkai muḍivuṯru oṉḏrāy oḷirum taṉmaiyē taṉ nilaimai tāṉ.*

Import: If the ego-sense, 'I am the body' persists, notions of 'you' (as the one in front) and another as 'he' also appear real. When by the intellectual quest of the Truth underlying the 'I', the I-sense getting extinguished, the notions of 'you' and 'he' also cease. What shines thereafter as the sole survivor is the Truth of the Self – I.

Commentary: The ego-sense that rises as 'I' is the first person. The second (as you) and third persons (as he,

she and it) appear as 'the other' beings. Of these three, it is the 'I' that springs up first and only after that the others follow suit. In the absence of the I-sense none of these will prevail. It is clear thus that the ego-sense 'I' – the primary ignorance – is the root of all these distinctions such as 'you' and 'he' to come alive and appear as distinct entities.

taṉmaiyiṉ uṇmaiyait tāṉ āyndu (enquiring into the truth of I) refers to *Ātma Vicāra*, the quest of the Self and *taṉmai aṟiṉ* (if the real nature of I is known) refers to its culmination, namely, the annihilation of the ego. *Ātma Vicāra* is enquiring into the truth of I – the ego-sense – and its consummation deals a death blow to the ego and bequeaths the gift of the experience of being the Self.

That experience, it was seen earlier, is being the Non-dual Self, all by itself. In that state there is no plurality of souls with distinct badges like 'you' and 'he'. What shines is the Self as "I-I" in Aloneness, without a second as described in this verse *oṉḏṟāy oḷirum taṉmaiyē taṉ nilaimaitāṉ* (one's true state of being is that which shines as 'I' as the One and only One).

Here the objection raised by some is that if there be only one Self then by the Deliverance of one, all must be delivered; but that is not the case in the world. The answer to this puzzle is that even now there is none bound and nothing called bondage. The message that is conveyed loud and clear in this Text is that the Self is ever liberated, which is also the confirmed conclusion of *Vedāntins*. That there are no *ajñānis* in a *jñāni*'s perception is yet another proof of this truth. [To him Consciousness shines as one whole and not fragmented into parts.]

There is yet another way of reconciling this objection, though from an empirical – and not the Absolute – level. This

is proffered mainly to make it intelligible to those who raise the objection. The *Chidābhāśa* (the reflected *Chit*) or the *jīvā* is nothing but the reflected image of the One Pure Non-dual Real Self in the *Vijñānamaya kośa* (the intellectual sheath), one among the five sheaths. This Text speaks of this *jīvā* as the bondage itself and also as the one bound. While there are many such *jīvās* – multiple reflected Awarenesses – when one of such *Vijñānamaya kośas* (the intellectual sheaths) perishes due to the experience of *jñāna* – if the *jīvā* who appears there becomes liberated – just that reflection of Awareness gets obliterated. The other reflections of Awareness in the other intellectual sheaths will continue as such for nothing has happened to them. They continue to wallow in nescience. The *ajñānis* may empirically presume that they remain as they were. When one pseudo-consciousness dies the others continue to appear, as long as those corresponding intellectual sheaths – the reflecting media – prevail. The analogy of just one moon getting reflected as many in different waters contained in various pots will make this clear. The numerous pots are akin to the many bodies and the water within each corresponds to the *vijñānamaya kośas* – the reflecting media. As the real moon is only one so also the Real Self is but one. As there are many reflections of the moon, so are seen a great many *chidābhāsa jīvās*. When water from one pot is drained off, that reflected image is lost while the other images continue to appear as before. Though the Self is One and only One, for empirical reasons, the plurality of the *jīvās* is spoken of. But the appearance of the plurality of the souls does not affect the ultimate Truth of the Oneness of the Self.

This illustration is meant for men of immature minds to facilitate a clearer comprehension but in truth there is no

basis for such an issue to arise at all. The only response to it can be "Find out who you, who raise the question, are".

The plurality of sentient beings appears as other than – and different from – oneself due to the mental delusion caused by nescience. Just as the multitude of souls that appear real in a dream are not other than what is created by oneself (the dreamer), in waking too the plurality of the *jīvās* seen is neither true nor other than oneself.

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Exegesis: The world swarming with sentient beings and insentient objects is just an illusion and not true is by now a proven fact from the foregone verses. Human beings invariably occupy themselves with enquiries into the theories of creation, deluge or dissolution of the world and births in the past and future of the other constituent of the world, namely, *chidābhāśa* (*jīvā*) who is just a myth like the son of a barren woman. Not only do they embark in such fruitless investigations without knowing by enquiry the truth of their own Self, which alone needs be done but they also compound the problem by their wrong awareness of the truth of the Self that is contrary to reality. The futility of such enquiries has been sufficiently emphasized in the eleventh verse of this Text *aṟivuṟum taṉṉai* (without knowing the truth of the knower of the world). The same idea is presented here in a different way. All these enquiries spring forth from the belief of the layman that time, with its three divisions, present, past and future, is a truth. All time is only the present. Here the aspirant is forewarned against embarking on other enquiries but is exhorted to home in the quest of the truth of the Present.

15. nigazhviṉaip paṯṟi yiṟappedirvu niṟpa nigazhkā lavaiyu nigazhvē – nigazhvoṉḏṟē yiṉḏṟuṇmai tērā tiṟappedirvu tēravuṉa loṉḏṟiṉḏṟi yeṇṇa vuṉal.

Verse-split: *nigazhviṉai paṯṟi iṟappu edirvu niṟpa: nigazhkāl, avaiyum nigazhvē; nigazhvu oṉḏṟē; iṉḏṟu uṇmai tērādu, iṟappu edirvu tēra uṉal, 'oṉḏṟu' iṉḏṟi eṇṇa uṉal.*

Import: The past and future both appear only in relation to the currently occurring 'present'. At the time of their occurrence, the past and future also appear as the 'present'. The one called 'present' is all the three. Therefore without knowing the truth of the Self now in the 'present', indulging in enquiries of the past and future is like attempting to count (without the knowledge of and) leaving out the number one, the basic unit of reckoning.

Commentary: We call as present that part of time that is experienced currently. As and when it is experienced it becomes the present. As our experience changes, that which we recollect as having been experienced we call as 'past'. The experiences which we anticipate go under the name 'future'. Both, namely the 'past' and 'future', are so called according to the experiences undergone. Bhagavan reminds us that all these distinctions are fabricated by the mind and all time is only the 'present', the 'here and now'. The true present is the Self 'That which is' alone. That 'Self' is the Truth in all the three divisions of time. The Eternal Reality is indeed the Self alone. Itself not constricted by time It transcends time. That time itself is an imagined entity will be made clear in the verse that follows.

Therefore seeking that *uḷḷadu* – That which is – here and now and experiencing that Truth is the dictate of discipline for a *sādhak*. The Truth becomes well nigh impossible of attainment by mere enquiries into the illusions of past and future births. All such quests, based on the wrong assumption that all the present illusory manifestations are true and real, are therefore simply gainless.

The simile employed to explain this truth is *oṉḏriṉḏri eṇṇa uṉal*, attempting to count leaving out the prime number one. Only number one exists and none else, for all numerals are expansions or modifications of the basic unit of reckoning, namely, the number one. Just as the knowledge of this basic unit is fundamental to and indispensable for the further pursuit of the study of the discipline of Arithmetics, the Knowledge of the truth of the Self is the prime requisite for embarking on any other research or enquiry.

A seeker once asked Bhagavan as to how he can come to know how he was in his previous birth. Bhagavan answered, "Before you proceed to enquire into your previous lives, is the present birth the truth? Why not find out what is your reality now?"

Thus it will be seen that various researches in physical science on the objects of the world, experiments conducted by the chemical scientists, the studies of astrophysicists and astronomers on the planets like the sun of the solar galaxy are all in vain. Aspirants must keep themselves away from enquiries such as, "What was there before the world was created?. How did man originate? Were his ancestors apes or homosapiens? How did religious beliefs emanate? Did the earliest men worship plants, trees and ghosts? Do the present faiths and beliefs have their origin in those blind

superstitions?". Notwithstanding these even the most subtle investigative researches of the philosophers and rationalist investigators and the explorative enquiries by Metaphysicists not hearkening to the utterances of wisdom born of the experiences of the realized sages but conducted mainly on the strength of their mental prowess and worldly experiences alone are but plain ignorance.

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Exegesis: Both space as well as time are nothing but the extended offshoots of the ego; hence they also are not real. That they cease to exist in *Turīya*, the Ego-less State, is highlighted in the following verse.

16. nāmaṉḏṟi nāḷēdu nāḍēdu nāḍuṅgā
ṉāmuḍambē ṉāṇāṭṭu ṇāmpaḍuva – nāmuḍambō
nāmiṉḏṟaṉ ḏṟeṉḏṟumoṉḏṟu nāḍiṅgaṅ geṅgumoṉḏṟā
ṉāmuṇḍu nāṇāḍi ṉām.

Verse-split: *nām aṉḏṟi, nāḷ ēdu? nāḍu ēdu? nāḍuṅgāl nām uḍambēl, nāḷ nāṭṭuḷ nām paḍuvam: nām uḍambō? nām iṉḏṟu, aṉḏṟu, eṉḏṟum oṉḏṟu; nāḍu iṅgu, aṅgu, eṅgum oṉḏṟāl, nām uṇḍu, nāḷ nāḍu il nām.*

Import: When we seek the truth of the Self where are time and space apart from us? Indeed, if we are the body we will then be bound by space and time. But are we the body? We are the changeless One (the same form of Consciousness ever) at all times and in all places. We alone are, transcending space and time. (The Self alone is the sole Reality).

Commentary: Space and time have the ego – the pseudo self with the sense of existence rooted in a body-mind frame – as their support and stay. But no one knows space and time in deep sleep. Therefore space and time are mere thought-forms born of the mind. The rise of the basic thought 'I am the body' – the first sprouting of the ego – triggers all other thoughts in its train including those of space and time. Many of the recent researchers of modern Geo-physics the world over have veered round to the idea that time and space are not objective realities but mere mental phenomena.

But why, then, do we experience the feeling of being bound by space and time? The failure to introspect and examine the wrong awareness 'I am the body' born of ignorance, to reject it as 'not this, am I' and then enquiring the true nature of 'I' so as to ascertain and experience the Impartite or Unbroken Self has resulted in the bondage. This bondage is the outcome of attributing the nature of fragmentation into distinct units like the body to the unfragmented Whole Self and accepting it as our own (as of the Self). Only by the quest of the Self will this bondage be sundered.

When we enquire 'Who am I?', the True Content of 'I' will be revealed as That which is not eroded by time and space. Then, that the Self, transcending space and time, is the sole Reality will be comprehended in terms of experience. Reality is that which exists in the Ego-less State of being simply the Awareness, ever the same, never swerving from Its True Nature devoid of space, transcending time, and therefore Infinite. If the mind, by the quest of its source, attains quietude of the Self, space and time along with the ego and the world are swallowed up.

It is not all that right to state that the Self is at all Times; and that It is Everywhere. That It is a Content devoid of space and time is the whole Truth. Therefore It transcends mind and speech, for whatever is thought of by the mind is considered to be conditioned by space and time.*

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Exegesis: Though that the *jīvā*, *para* and the world are illusory and unreal has been so far elucidated, without being contradictory to it in the least, it was also stated that it is not unreal totally like the horns of a hare. They can be termed real by virtue of the 'reality', an aspect of the Substratum, that is borrowed. The succeeding two verses explain how an ignorant one, an *ajñāni*, perceives wrongly the world superimposed on the Substratum as real accompanied by the

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* This content is revealed by another verse also by Bhagavan. It does not form part of this Text but comes under the head "The Assorted Verses".

Verse:

nāmaṉḍṛi nāḷēdu nāmnammai nāḍādu
nāmuḍal enḍṛeṇṇilnamai nāḷuṇṇum – nāmuḍambō
naminḍṛu chenḍṛavaru nāḷenḍṛum onḍṛadanāl
nāmuṇḍu nāḷunḍa nām.

Import: Where is time but for us? If we, without seeking our Self, think we are the body, we will be eaten up by time. But are we the body? We ever are the One Self today, in the days bygone as well as in the days to come. We, who have consumed time alone are.

In the state of ignorance *jīvā* is consumed by time and in the State of *jñāna* the real Self consumes time is what is stated here, thus proving that time is an imagined entity and it perishes with the dawn of *jñāna*.

non-perception of its Substratum – the Self. But a *jñāni*, a realized sage, perceives the world as it is.

The *jñāni*, spoken of here is a *jīvanmukta*, one who has realized his real Self but appears to be in a body for the men of worldly perception.

This verse clearly reveals how a *jñāni* and an *ajñāni* perceive the body and the stark difference in their awareness of it.

17. uḍaṉāṉē taṉṉai yuṇarārk kuṇarndārk kuḍalaḷavē nāṉṯṟa ṉuṇarārk – kuḍaluḷḷē taṉṉuṇarndārk kellaiyaṟat tāṉoḷiru nāṉiduvē yiṉṉavartam bhēḍameṉa veṇ.

Verse-split: *uḍal nāṉē, taṉṉai uṇarārkku, uṇarndārkku; uḍalaḷavē nāṉ, taṉ(ṉai) uṇarārkku; uḍaluḷḷē, taṉ(ṉai) uṇarndārkku, ellai aṟat tāṉ oḷirum 'nāṉ'; iduvē iṉṉavartam bhēdam eṉa eṇ.*

Import: The body is the Self both to him who does not know the Self, as also to him that does. The one who knows not the Self believes himself limited to the body. The Self shines within (the body) as the Infinite Being to the knower of the Self. This indeed is the difference between the two.

Commentary: An *ajñāni* and a *jñāni* both speak of the body as the Self but the intent of both is at variance with each other.

An *ajñāni* when he says 'I' he refers to the 'body' and confounds the Self indistinctly with the body in the sense that there is no Self other than the body. Accordingly he

participates in the activities of the transactional world. This is the ego-sense (the idea of the body as the Self) verily what is called the nescience or primal ignorance.

When a *jñāni* or a sage says 'I' he is aware of the Impartite (unbroken) Real *Sat-Chit* – the Substratum for everything including the body – as the Self. Since the body is just an appearance on that very *Sat-Chit*, it is not different from or other than That. In his perception there exists nothing other than the Self – the *Sat-Chit*. This is further elaborated in verse 31 *taṉṉai azhittezhunda* (for a *jīvanmukta* who has rooted out his ego-self). This perception of him does not allow him to regard the body as the non-self. Since the Self is All, the body is also the Self. For a *jñāni* who sees everything as the Substratum – the Self – what he perceives is not a 'body'. If the body is viewed as a body, it is unreal. If it is perceived as the Self – the Substratum – it is real. Therefore, for a *jñāni*, a 'body' is not a body nor does he have the attachment, love or fondness for it. That the perceptions of a *jñāni* and an *ajñāni* are opposed diametrically to each other is thus clearly revealed.

The body is the Self for the *ajñāni*. The body is also the Self for the *jñāni*. The reason for the seeming similarity in the perceptions of both is due to the fact that the Self pervades and exists as all whether veiled or unveiled by *māyā*.

The Self that is ever Real is veiled by the body due to the ego-sense of an *ajñāni* who deludes himself into thinking that the body is the Self. The clarity of the Self-Awareness of a *jñāni*, realized as the most direct experience, proves the unreal body as unreal and the Real Unfragmented Whole – the Self – alone shines for him. This, in a nutshell, is the view of Bhagavan.

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Exegesis: When both the *jñāni* and the *ajñāni* say "the world is real", though the words are identical, their import is totally different. The *ajñāni*, unaware of the Truth – the Substratum for the world appearance – perceives only the superimposed world of names and forms and believes it to be supremely real, in its own right, while for a *jñāni* what shines is the nameless and formless Substratum as the Supreme Reality and the world is completely erased from his perception. So runs the exposition of Bhagavan.

18. ulahuṇmai yāhu muṇarvillārk kuḷḷārk kulahaḷavā muṇmai yuṇarārk – kulahiṉuk kādhāra māyuruvaṯ ṟārumuṇarn dāruṇmai yīdāhum bhēdamivark keṇ.

Verse-split: *ulahu uṇmai āhum, uṇarvu illārkku uḷḷārkku; ulahaḷavām uṇmai uṇarārkku; ulahiṉukku ādhāramāy uru aṯṟu ārum uṇarndār uṇmai; īdu āhum bhēdam ivarkku; eṇ.*

Import: The world is real both to the ignorant and to the knower of the Real. The one who knows not the Real believes the Real to be just co-extensive with the world. On the other hand, to the Knower, the Real shines as the Formless, Whole, Unfragmented Substratum of the world. Thus great indeed is the difference between the Knower of the Truth and the ignorant.

Commentary: When an ignorant man says "The world is real", he believes that the world is real in its own right or as such with all the superimposed variety of distinctions of names and forms that world is crowded with. From the teachings bestowed by Bhagavan that have been thus far

delineated, it would be clear by now that for a *jñāni* who has achieved Deliverance, the superimpositions of the distinctions of names and forms are myths, fit only to be rejected outright.

For the reason cited above, to an *ajñāni*, the Truth is just limited to the size of the world. The appearance of the world excludes the Reality and the Real Self or Brahman is effectually concealed by the world. Names and forms have become the Reality for the one who is blinded by the unawareness of his own Real Self. And the Formless, Nameless, Pure Being and Consciousness that transcends speech and thought has become simply a void or nullity. Hence he can rightly be called an Atheist. The *Upanishads* denounce him saying that he has committed suicide by killing the Self – by transforming the Self into the mere form of the world.

This fact indeed, was very often dwelt upon by Bhagavan also. Not only do illiterate or laymen deserve this denouncement but also the scholars who wax eloquent on *Advaita* Vedānta as well who, while rendering mere lip service to the Ultimate truth 'Brahman alone is real', perform actions just like the ignorant ones thereby betraying their convictions or – the lack of it to be precise – so vociferously expressed by them. Hence they too are to be bracketed with Atheists. A *jñāni* alone is a true Theist with unassailable belief, for his actions never negate the existence of the Self.

When a *jñāni*, the one of Right and Pure Awareness, says 'the world is real' the intent is that all that appears as 'world' is not other than its Substratum, the Self – the Formless Pure Consciousness – which is unaffected by false appearance. This is the content of the line *ulahiṉukku ādhāramāy uruvaṯru ārum uṇarndār uṇmai* (For the *jñāni*, the realized Reality, the form of truth, shines as the Nameless

and Formless, Effulgent Whole, the basic Substratum of the world appearance). *uru aṯṟu ārum* (shines formless) imply that the forms – the distinctions that fragment the world – are not seen by a *jñāni*. 'Forms are not seen' implies that the world itself is not perceived for names and forms are the very pith and marrow of the world. How will he call real or unreal the world that is unseen by him? Therefore 'the world is real' has a totally different connotation for a *jñāni*; it only means the basic Substratum of the world is real.

When differences of such enormous magnitude exist between the ignorant ones and the realized sages, some who neither know nor attempt to know that (difference) try to evaluate a *jñāni* by the standard of the finite awareness of their conditioned minds and come to perverse and absurd conclusions. Some even indulge in meaningless descriptions such as "the *jñāni* sees difference in non-difference and experiences non-difference in difference". A sage, in truth, perceives neither difference nor non-difference. Non-difference is not something that can be perceived. What, then, is the purport of saying that "a *jñāni* has the perception of non-difference?" His perception of non-difference can rightly be described as the absence of perception of any difference. So runs the explanation of Bhagavan.

That the world appearances will not be perceived by a *jñāni* has already been revealed in verse 4 (*uruvam tāṉāyiṉ* – if one is the body the world etc. will appear also to be with forms). Furthermore the third and fifth verses of the Hymn *Arunachala Ashtakam* by Bhagavan dwell clearly and at length on this fact.

The Substratum and the superimposition effectively obscure each other. The Self and the world will not shine

at the same time by the same logic that the snake and rope which effectually conceal one another cannot appear together simultaneously.

The ignorant one who has exiled himself from his Truth – the real Self – perceives only the world and therefore the Self remains concealed to him. It is beyond doubt that the Self shines as the unvariegated Infinite Consciousness to a *jñāni* to whom the world appearance has become obliterated. He exists as Self – alone in his state of Purity as the Pure Consciousness without the world. (But the world cannot exist without the Self).

That a *jīvanmukta*, a liberated *jñāni*, appears to perceive the world and wills and executes actions accordingly in the transactional world is only in the perception of the on-lookers. He is not a part of the world nor can the agency of action be ascribed to him. This will be the subject of discussion later. For now, suffice it to say this much, for this very purport forms the theme of another verse yet to come. Though in the perception of others he appears to continue to possess a body and mind, there is no doubt that the causal body of nescience – the *Ānandamaya kośa* – the bliss sheath – no longer exists for him. He remains the Self – One and Alone – without the least tenuous link of the gross and subtle bodies. (The truth is that our mind creates the *jñāni*'s body and mind just as it creates the whole world including God. We see a *jñāni* as a person in our dream of relativity occurring on the sleep of ignorance). The self-same power that resides in the Hearts of all and by which activities of all creatures are prompted and sustained, is behind the actions of those *jñānis*. As he is established in the Ego-less and mind-free state, the power of the Lord alone functions and It does so in all Its finesse, fit for

the Almighty alone, with no let or hindrance. The activities of the *jīvanmukta* in the empirical world will be explained in one of the *Supplementary Verses*.

"It is the elephant in rut that veils the wood

It is the elephant in rut that gets veiled in the wood

It is the great elements that veil the Transcendent

It is the great elements that get veiled in the Transcendent."

The above verse from *Tirumantiram* by Saint Tirumūlar is worth recalling here.

The 'elephant' in wood appears so real that a child finds its form delightful. When informed of the reality that is simply wood, not only does the child reject it, it being totally unacceptable, but it is even angered. Likewise the ignorant ones delight themselves with the forms of the world but when informed of the truth that all these are the Nameless, Formless Brahman, they easily become enraged.

The Transcendent is hidden by the five elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether. In the enlightened state the Transcendent alone shines and the others just fade away into nothingness.

In the perception of an *ajñāni* 'Being' or 'Existence' appears as an attribute in the objects of the world. But 'Being' is itself the 'content' and not a mere quality. 'Being' is not characteristic of *uḷḷadu* (That which Is); It (*uḷḷadu*) is the very embodiment of 'Existence'. The world forms attach themselves to 'That' due to mental delusion, but with Right Awareness, they simply melt away and that *uḷḷadu* becomes Pure, stripped of all these appendages.

Thus we deduce that the pronouncements 'The world is real', 'The world is unreal' are both true. But an ignorant one is not aware of the real content of the statement 'The world is real'. The world is not real in the sense in which an *ajñāni* deems it as real, but it is indeed unreal.

It is very difficult, indeed, for an *ajñāni* to comprehend the true import of the sentence 'the world is real', in its entirety except by the grace of a *Jñāna Guru* who is established in the state of Deliverance as Infinite Consciousness. Therefore, it would be advisable and wise for a novice to assume the attitude that the world is unreal to start with and to turn the mind away from the world and practise the quest of the Self in right earnest.

We come to the end of the analysis of the duality of *jñāna* and *ajñāna* (knowledge and ignorance) and of the triads. Knowledge or *jñāna* is to remain anchored in and as the Self while ignorance is non-awareness of the Self and the misperception of It as the illusory body and world. This is the content, succinctly put, of the exhortations offered so far.

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Exegesis: Yet another offspring of the ego is the twain, fate (*vidhi*) and human will (*mati*). If what one wills becomes a *fait accompli*, he hails it as the victory of the prowess of the mind. If it turns out to be otherwise, he calls it, with a sneer, 'the whimsical play of fate'. He honestly regards this duo as different from and antagonistic to, each other. The truth of this is lucidly posited in this verse by Bhagavan.

19. vidhimati mūla vivēka milārkkē
vidhimati vellum vivādam – vidhimatikaṭ
kōrmudalān taṉṉai yuṇarndā ravaitaṇandār
cārvarō piṉṉumavai cāṯṟu.

Verse-split: *vidhi mati mūla vivēkam ilārkkē vidhimati vellum vivādam; vidhimatikaṭku ōr mudal ām taṉṉai uṇarndār avai taṇandār cārvarō piṉṉum avai cāṯṟu.*

Import: Only those *ajñānis* who are unenlightened on the true nature of the ego – the root of fate and human will – love to dispute as to which of these two will prevail. Those who have known and realized the truth of the ego – the sole substratum of fate and freewill – have transcended them both. Will they ever resort to them again?

Commentary: An ignorant man with the *dehātma bhāva* – the misconstruing of the body as the Self – thinks that fate and human will are different from and antagonistic to each other. Out of the ignorance of confounding the Self with the body he performs actions with a view to attain and enjoy the fruits of those actions. Only when the anticipated and desired fruits are not achieved, he attributes the staying of it to the play of fate. But for the ego, thoughts of fruits of actions cannot be entertained nor will the distinction of fate and freewill appear and beset one. Those who believe the pair to be true are those under the spell of the ego, and who indulge themselves in disputes as to whether will free will conquer fate or will fate vanquish free will.

The ego-mind fabricates the distinction between fate and freewill. If the quest 'to whom is this difference?' is

pursued, the root of both, namely, the 'I'-sense will appear. Since the ego is the origin of this pair, the truth of the pair is inextricably mingled with the truth of the ego. When the investigation of the truth of 'I' is embarked upon, the ego perishes and all the distinctions born of the ego are also rendered naught. This is the central teaching of this Text. The sage established as the form of 'Self' in the Ego-less State is not aware of this distinction. This meaning is precisely taught in the line *vidhimatikaṭku ōr mudal ām taṉṉai uṇarndār avai taṇandār* (those who have realized their truth as the form of Awareness – the truth of the ego which is the source of this twain – have destroyed them both).

A *jñāni* who has no mind has neither *sankalpas* nor *vikalpas*. He neither wills nor doubts. Neither does he will any action bound by compulsion nor does he will the way the fruits of actions should turn out to be. Hence this dispute is totally contentless for him.

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Exegesis: Another important pair of opposites among the dyads is the *jīvā* and *para* – the individual soul and God. Considering as real and true the *jīvā* – the mere reflected awareness, a total nullity – is akin to misconstruing the only Real, Perfect, Whole, Unbroken Content – the Self – as a whiff that the *jīvā* is. An appearance of *mahat* (the great or whole) is bound to appear as the opposite of *jīvā* (the trifle). The mind projects that very Self as Lord, the Impartite Content of the wealth of Awareness. Though this imaginary creation is rich and good, since it has been parented by the ego-sense – the primary nescience – it is equally illusory and unreal. In other words, both the *jīvā* – the trivial and the

finite – and the *mahat* – the Infinite and the Great – the Lord, are unreal. If regarded as real, both become real. If proved unreal, both together become myths. The Self or Brahman alone is the sole Truth, in which there is no triad either. Having a vision of the Lord is an illusion born of ignorance. This Content is highlighted in the two succeeding verses.

The first verse declares the truth that God, being the Self, cannot become an object of perception involving a *triputi*.

20. kāṇun taṉaiviṭṭut tāṉkaḍavu ḷaikkāṇal
kāṇu maṉōmayamāṁ kāṭcitaṉaik – kāṇumavaṉ
ṯrāṉkaḍavuḷ kaṇḍāṉān taṉmudalait tāṉmudalpōyt
tāṉkaḍavu ḷaṉḏriyila dāl.

Verse-split: *kāṇum taṉai viṭṭu tāṉ kaḍavuḷaik kāṇal, kāṇum maṉōmayamām kāṭci; taṉaik kāṇumavaṉtāṉ kaḍavuḷ kaṇḍāṉām, taṉ mudalait tāṉ mudal pōy tāṉ kaḍavuḷ aṉḏri iladāl.*

Import: Forsaking oneself, the seer (during the spell under the sway of ignorance), having the vision of a form of God is but the perception of a thought form of the mind; it is not the true vision of God. Being oneself that very Supreme Being, to say that the one, who, with the loss of the ego-sense, perceives the Truth of the seer, perceives the Source of oneself – the Lord – is not true either; for in this non-dual state (of one being the very Self – the true Lord) there is no such thing as 'perception'.

Commentary: That devotees worshipping the Lord – a projection of their mental conception – with names

and forms also attain to the high state of beatitude of union with the Lord, was stated earlier. Since the word *bhakti* or devotion, means 'union', it implies *ipso facto* the truth of *vibhakti* (separation) prior to such union. An investigation as to whether the separation was real will lead one to the quest of 'Who am I?'. That in turn, will conclusively prove that there has never been a separation at all to start with. As the Indivisible All-Full Self is the Lord, how can one ever be separated from one's own Self? This truth forms the purport of the verse 14 of the Supplementary verses *viṉaiyum vibhakti viyōgam* (seeking the Self by enquiring as to whom are action and separation from God...) as well.

Though this is the stark truth, assuming the separation to be real and as a means to terminate this separation, a *sātvik* seeker (man of pure mind and of good conduct and possessed of qualities conducive to the state of egolessness) develops devotion. Such a seeker, further assuming that God has a personality (for he regards himself as a body) and is the 'other' and outside of him, unseen and unknown, takes to various *sādhanas* in the path of devotion to obtain a direct perception or vision of Him. This *upāsana* bestows on him immaculate mental purity and fortifies his power of single pointedness. He may even gain a vision of that deity that he so devoutly worships and consequently may feel blessed as having achieved all there is to achieve. But soon the vision will dissolve leaving the seeker with an earnest longing for frequent visions. Such a yearning has a salubrious effect for it intensifies deeply his devotion and love towards the Lord.

Ultimately by the Grace of the Lord (Bhagavan says Grace is nothing but the Lord seated as Self in the Heart) his 'I' and 'mine' get attenuated, and he, by the yoga of the

surrender of his ego-self, attains to the truly Supreme State and Beatitude – the experience of the Knowledge of the Self which very truth is vouchsafed in the second invocatory verse of this Text *maraṇa bhaya mikkuḷa* (people seized with intense fear of death).

That the vision of the Lord in a form of one's choice is not real, it being simply a thought form – a product of the mind stuff – is the truth underscored here by Bhagavan. The Transcendent Content seated within oneself in the Heart shining as the very Self, is objectified as the Lord and regarded as the 'other', distinct from oneself, and one attains a vision of that same Lord by worshipping Him with intense devotion. That vision is not a true vision but an illusory appearance born of the imagination of a *sātvik* mind. Since all that is perceived is within the seer himself, the truth of what is seen remains within (the truth of) the seer. That vision – of a form – being unreal, disappears. As the very Self – the eternal, ever-experienced – is the truth of the Lord, a true vision of God is to Be the Self, by experiencing the Self; such a vision cannot be subject to disappearance. Though this experience is called a 'vision', really it is not a vision involving the *triputi* for here the distinctions (like the seer, the seen and the sight) get coalesced into one. What is, is One and there is no 'other'. The term 'vision' is employed just as a conventional usage and no more.

It is clear that as the 'vision' perceived by a devout seeker is merely a mental form and, therefore, unreal, he has not perceived the Lord – truly as He is. But will not a *jñāni* who has obtained a 'vision of the Self' by the Experience of Being the Self, see God, is the question that springs to the mind next. The latter part of this verse is by way of an answer

to that query. *taṉaik kāṇumavaṉ tāṉ kaḍavuḷ kaṇḍāṉām, taṉ mudalait tāṉ mudal pōy tāṉ kaḍavuḷ aṉḏṟi iladāl*. This means, with the individuality, the *jīva bhāva* or ego-sense, annihilated he (the Self) not being other than the Lord, has a vision of the Lord, the principle of his Source. This is not correct or true either, is the content.

That God is not an object of perception both ways is proved. The vision of God during the period under the sway of ignorance is but a thought form of the mind. In the State of Knowledge as there is no 'seeing' in being the Self which Alone remains, *Advaita* (the non-dual one) is ever the sole Truth.

The latter part of the verse lends itself for yet another interpretation as well. One who has gained a 'vision' of the Self by the experience of Being the Self – the one who has perceived himself as he truly is – is the one who has had a vision of the Lord having gained unity with the Lord by the annihilation of the ego-self, the cause of *jīvatva* or individuality. This also conveys the same import. A *jñāni* – a realized sage – is the one who sees the Lord as He really is – as the Self – and his experience by empirical usage is called 'the vision of the Lord'. That this is the true perception, and perception in a form is unreal and illusory is the import of this verse. The state that was termed as 'True meditation' in the very first invocatory verse of this Text is verily the 'true perception' mentioned here.

In the true perception of the experience of Being the Ātman, the triad of the seer, seen and the sight, ceases to exist. With the dawn of Experience the perceiving ego perishes and with that both the object of perception and also the sight go

out of existence. Brahman – the common underlying Truth of both God and the individual – alone survives and That remains as the Self. That is neither seen nor does It see; That is neither known nor does It know (He is neither an object of perception nor an object of knowledge).

The mythical dichotomy between *jīvā* and *Īśvara*, the individual and the God, stands disproved by this verse [TO SEE GOD IS TO BE GOD (THE SELF)].

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Exegesis: Since the *jīvā* and *Īśvara* are not two but in essence One, the *darśan* or vision of God is the same as the vision of the Self. That this is the state of non-distinction is explained in the ensuing verse.

21. taṉṉaittāṉ kāṇa ṯṟalaivaṉ ṯṟaṉaikkāṇa leṉṉumpaṉ ṉūluṇmai yeṉṉaiyeṉiṉ – ṯṟaṉṉaittāṉ kāṇalevaṉ ṯṟāṉoṉḏṟāṟ kāṇavoṇā dēṯṟalaivaṟ kāṇaleva ṉūṇādal kāṇ.

Verse-split: *'taṉṉait tāṉ kāṇal' 'talaivaṉ taṉaik kāṇal' eṉṉum pal nūl uṇmai eṉṉai eṉiṉ, taṉṉait tāṉ kāṇal evaṉ? tāṉ oṉḏṟāl, kāṇa oṇādēl talaivaṉ kāṇal evaṉ? ūṇ ādal kāṇ.*

Import: The truth of the Scriptural statements like: "the vision of the Self" is "the vision of God", is that neither is truly a 'vision'. How, then, can there be a vision of one's Self? The Self being but One cannot be 'seen'. That being so, who is there to see or how to see God? Hence 'True vision' consists in becoming food, indeed for the Lord.

Commentary: If the 'Self' is to be seen, the 'Self', as an entity, has to be two. The Self being one cannot become an object of perception. (For an act of perception two things are required, the seer and that which is seen).

The Truth of the Self and the Truth of God is just one and the same; or 'to see the Self' is 'to see the Lord'. Therefore seeing God as He truly is, is an impossibility indeed.

What, then, can be the import of the statements of spiritual classics? The answer is that it is to offer the individuality or the ego-sense as food to be consumed by the Lord which means to merge in Him indistinguishably and to remain only as 'That'. This is both 'the vision of the Lord' and 'the vision of the Self' as well.

In verse 25 of *Upadeśa Undiyār* Bhagavan speaks of the same content: *taṉṉai upādhi viṭṭu ōrvadu tān īśaṉ taṉṉai uṇarvadām undī paṟa, tānāy oḷirvadāl undī paṟa*. Becoming aware of one's Self apart from the vehicle of the five sheaths making up the body is itself rightly knowing God, because it is He that shines (in the Heart) as the Self.

The *upādhis* or adjuncts, namely, the three bodies or the five sheaths are the cause for the appearance of distinction between the *jīvā* (individual) and *Īśvara* (the God). These adjuncts get destroyed by experiencing Knowledge.

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Exegesis: The Truth of the Lord is also the Truth of the individual. Both the vision of the Lord and the Knowledge of the Lord cannot be in the realm of triad. This truth of non-distinction, namely, 'knowing God is being God' is explained in the verse that follows.

22. matikkoḷi tandam matikku ḷoḷiru
matiyiṉai yuḷḷē maḍakkip – patiyiṟ
padittiḍuda laṉḏṟip patiyai matiyāṉ
matittiḍuda leṅgaṉ mati.

Verse-split: *matikku oḷi tandu am matikkuḷ oḷirum matiyiṉai uḷḷē maḍakki patiyil padittiḍudal aṉḏṟi patiyai matiyāl matittiḍudal eṅgaṉ, mati.*

Import: The Self (the Lord) who is Pure Awareness lends the light of Awareness to the mind and shines within the mind (in the Heart). How then can one know Him by the mind except by turning the mind inward, away from the objective phenomena of the world and unifying it with the Lord?

Commentary: The truth of the Lord, referred to as *pathy* here, is stated in the opening line of this verse, *matikku oḷi tandu am matikkuḷ oḷirum*: as "imparting or lending the light of consciousness to the mind and glowing within the mind". Awareness is not natural to or an inherent trait of the mind. That Light or Knowledge is the Light of Being and Awareness – the Self within the Heart, the source of mind – and indeed, is the Truth of the Lord. This 'borrowed awareness' of the mind is just enough to imagine and instruct the knowledge of the objects and matters of the empirical world and that too contrary to the truth! This awareness cannot even approach the Ātman – the Light of its Light – for that awareness is not other than the Self, the very form of Awareness. In other words, in its attempt to know the Self, the mind either gets consumed by the Self or would end up acquiring erroneous knowledge. The mind always misconstrues the Self as the Lord, as different from and as other than oneself. But this is

wrong identification. Right awareness is to know the Self as the Self as It really is and that is, to remain (as) the Self.

The mind verily is the obstacle that stands in the way of knowing and Being the Self as It truly is. That state of non-distinction will not be attained so long as the mind assumes and believes in its separate identity and engages itself in activities. The one and only way to achieve this is to redirect the light of awareness by turning it inward and focusing the mind towards its source, the *pathy*, or the Lord, or the Self. Then the real form of the Lord – the Self – Being and Awareness – shines without any let or hindrance and nescience is rooted out. This very process of *sādhana* – the way to win the Self – couched in the words, *matiyiṉai uḷḷē maḍakki patiyil padittiḍudal* – the mind restrained from becoming externalized, turned inward within and lodged firmly with the Lord – is explained in the chapter on 'The Quest' which follows.

But devotion as a practice is inescapable and has to be carried on so long as the mind exists, for the distinctive difference between the Lord and the individual (*jīvā*) appears as real until the ego is stamped out of existence. However devotion at its best is to know the lord as the Self within and seek Him by the *sādhana* delineated here.

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Exegesis: Of the first three principles postulated, namely, the world, the Lord and the *jīvā*, the world and the Lord have been dwelt upon in detail thus far. The truth of the third postulate, namely, the *jīvā*, is left out and that is brought to the fore in the four verses that follow. Though the Self is shrouded by these – the phantom creations of

the spurious mind – that the Light of Awareness shines unceasingly as 'I-I' in the Heart is the fundamental teaching enunciated by Bhagavan. This is brought out lucidly in verse 8 of the *Supplementary Verses* which goes as *idayamām guhaiyiṉ nāppaṉ*... (In the centre of the heart cavern shines Brahman as 'I-I' – the Self). When that Light of Awareness conjoins with the mind, the *jīvā*, the ego – the *chidābhāsa* – appears and along with it the world and the Lord appear. The thought 'I am this body' is the very form of this little self or ego. Just the 'I' alone that is entangled in this, is the Light of the Self. Isolating that 'I', the element of the Reality, and identifying oneself with it and seeking by the quest of 'Who am I?', the source or the origin of that Light, must be realized. The preliminary requisite to such an enquiry is the conviction of the definitive knowledge that 'this body – not I' and the outright rejection of the notion 'I am this body' as a sequel. Therefore the axiomatic truth 'I am not this body' is expounded here.

23. nāṉeṉḏṟit dēha navilā duṟakkattu
nāṉiṉḏṟeṉ ḏṟāru navilvadilai – nāṉoṉ
ḏṟezhundapi ṉellā mezhuminda nāṉeṅ
gezhumeṉḏṟu nuṇmatiyā leṇ.

Verse-split: *'nāṉ' eṉḏṟu it dēham navilādu; 'uṟakkattum nāṉ iṉḏṟu' eṉḏṟu ārum navilvadu ilai; 'nāṉ' oṉḏṟu ezhunda piṉ ellām ezhum; inda 'nāṉ' eṅgu ezhum eṉḏṟu nuṇ matiyāl eṇ.*

Import: This body (being insentient) will not say on its own 'I'. None ever says "I did not exist in deep sleep". All this (the world et al) come into existence only after the rise of the feeling of I – the ego. Therefore

investigate diligently and seek the source wherefrom the ego, 'I' rises with a sharp and finely subtle mind.

Commentary: The 'Self' is declared to be the true meaning of the term 'I'. The 'I' is the very form of It – the Ātman. Admixing with the mind, It gets constricted as the dwarf of the ego and is regarded as just a speck of a trifle while in truth It is the Whole Unbroken Being and Awareness. Since the Infinite appears limited as the finite *jīvā*, the *jīvā* is often called an element or aspect of Reality or a fragment of God. But never did that Impartite and Unbroken Content, ever get fragmented into aspects or strands. It is common knowledge that because of the very presence of the instinctive feeling or awareness of 'I' (*nāṉ*), that the Content called (*taṉ*) exists and shines. (Thus the 'ego' itself is the proof – Self declared – that we exist. But we are not that ego). That 'I', unfortunately, is identified with the body – a creation of the mind – and known indistinguishably with the Self, 'I'. This misconception or perverse awareness is called an *adhyāsa* or a superimposition. On account of this superimposition, the Light of Awareness of the Self is conjoined with the bodies (both gross and mental) and the impurities and deficiencies associated with the bodies are added on to the Ātman and between the two, a new entity – purely an imaginary one – springs up. This is the story of the *jīvā*. A subsequent verse reveals that as '*jīvā*' there is none, other than this spurious little self.

The first query that springs up is 'Are we the body?'. The answer 'We are not the body' is in perfect accord with inferential reasoning that is invincible, is clearly pointed out here by Bhagavan. The reasoning offered here is twofold. The body being inert, awareness is not its inherent endowment

but one foisted on it by virtue of association. This is the first reasoning. The second one is as follows: In deep sleep characterized by the absence of the body (that is when there is no awareness of the body) we do exist and none ever says 'I did not exist in deep sleep'. Can the awareness of 'I' that has been decisively agreed to be present before and after the spell of sleep, cease to exist in deep sleep? Definitely not. Further the proof of having been in deep sleep or 'being' in deep sleep is the statement made by everyone after waking up, 'I slept blissfully', thereby recollecting the bliss of sleep so experienced. The one who had experienced this can alone recollect what was experienced. Further on waking up, those actions commenced, but left unfinished before falling asleep, are resumed. The self-same person who went to sleep wakes up and assumes again charge of the same activities in the empirical world. The one who went to sleep as Venkataraman does not wake up as another, say, Gopalakrishnan. It is thus evident that the awareness 'I' had subsided in a very subtle fashion in deep sleep.

The certainty that we did exist in deep sleep is thus proved. Our awareness of existence continued unbroken in deep sleep also even though there was no awareness of the body. This goes to prove the fact 'we are not the body', with certainty. Bhagavan expatiates on this truth further in the tenth verse of the *Supplementary Verses* with the opening line *deham gaḍa nihar* – This body is inert and insentient like a mud pot.

This 'I' wraps itself up with the mind and the world and subsides during sleep and on waking it unfolds the mind and the world again proving thereby that this is the seed of origin for the world appearance.

Bhagavan affirms that *Ātma Vicāra* or Quest of the Self is just the search for the source of this 'I' which is the prime cause for the appearance of everything, the world et al, that culminates in the realization of the Truth of oneself.

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Exegesis: The *jīvā* is just a myth created by *adhyāsa* or superimposition mentioned earlier. This spurious or conjured up being is not a verity from the Transcendental level is explained in this verse.

24. jaḍavuḍaṉā ṉeṉṉādu saccit tudiyā
duḍalaḷavā nāṉoṉ ḏṟudikku – miḍaiyilitu
cicjaḍakgi ranthibandhañ jīvaṉuṭpa meyyahandai
yiccamu sāramaṉa meṇ.

Verse-split: *jaḍa uḍal 'nāṉ' eṉṉādu; sat-cittu udiyātu; uḍal aḷavā 'nāṉ' oṉḏṟu udikkum iḍaiyil itu cit jaḍa giranthi, bandham, jīvaṉ, nuṭpamey, ahandai, ic camusāram, maṉam, eṇ.*

Import: The body, which is inert does not vaunt 'I'. The Transcendent – the very form of *Sat-Chit* – has no rising (or setting). But between these two crops up a spurious being as the form of ego assuming the size and shape of the body. This is *chit-jaḍa-granthi* (the knot between consciousness and the inert body), bondage, *jīvā*, the subtle body, the ego, this life of transmigratory cycle, mind and all else.

Commentary: That this body, insentient, cannot be the awareness 'I' has been explained already. What,

then, is this 'I'? The awareness of 'I' rises and subsides rising on waking up from sleep and subsiding in sleep. The experience of the realized sages is that the Self – the very form of Being and Awareness – that transcends time, neither rises nor sets. Therefore this 'I' is neither the inert body; nor the Pure Awareness – the *Sat-Chit* Self – the ever present Reality. What then is this? The terms *uḍal aḷavā 'nāṉ' oṉḏṟu udikkum iḍaiyil* (In between there arises something with body as the measure) furnish the reply to that query.

The Light of Awareness of the Self which is ever present shining ceaselessly and the inert body are compounded with non-difference and as a result a spurious I – the *jīvā* – an imagined entity – springs up. This imaginary *jīvā* appears by the superimposition of the Awareness Nature of the Self on to the body and the defects and impurities of the body (subtle and physical) on to the Self and considering the two-incompatible things indistinctly as one.

It is evident that this little self has no identifiable form of his own. Hence he is described as *chit-jaḍa-granthi*, as the knot fabricated between the Self – the Reality – and the non-Self, the inert body. As if bound together by a knot, the Self and the body are considered as one, indistinguishably. This *adhyāsa* or superimposition is termed nescience. The two, in fact, are utterly unlike and incongruous. While the body is insentient, the Self, on the other hand, is the very form of Awareness. The body is unreal but the Self is the sole Reality. Never can this twain meet or be considered identical or on an equal footing. Hence the knot is an equally illusory one and consequently the Self is not affected, in the least, by this.

As no other distinct entity as *jīvā* is perceivable apart from this illusory awareness, this is termed *jīvā* and he, just like the world, is fictitious and unreal.

The other name with which the *jīvā* is credited with is *chidābhāsa* which means just 'a reflected Awareness' whose appearance as '*Chit*' is totally false. As he, in truth, is fictitious, Bhagavan christens him *pōliuyir* – the pseudo-Self – in verse 17 of *Anubandham* that goes *bhūparam tāṅga iṟai pōli uyir tāṅgal adu* – while the Lord bears the entire burden of the world the pseudo being assumes to bear it...).

Mind, the root-cause of *saṃsāra*, the Persian wheel of pain and pleasure, is an expanded manifestation of this spurious I. Therefore this 'I' itself is called the mind.*

Since *saṃsāra* is born of the mind, *saṃsāra* or life is yet another name the little self has acquired for itself.

As mind is nothing but the subtle body, the subtle body is another epithet for the little self.

The little self seems to be bound and to suffer the bondage going through the *saṃsāric* circle. Were it to be asked, "Who is the one bound?" the *chidābhāsa* will be singled out. Bondage, therefore, is intrinsic to the ego-sense and will not cease till the ego-sense survives. Therefore, the little ego-self is itself the real bondage. Bondage is nothing but a thought. But where is bondage in the absence of a mind?

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* It is said in verse 18 of *Upadeśa Undiyār: yāṉām maṉam eṉal* (the I – the ego – is the mind).

The ego-sense is the very form of this *jīvā* that arises as 'I am this body or mind'. Ego, therefore, is another sobriquet for it.

Bhagavan clarifies that, in general, all ills that beset one as a consequence of nescience – non-truth (*asatya*), non-righteousness (*adharma*), evil desires, grief, yearning, hell, inconstancy, murder, theft, death, ignorance and yet others are all but the ego-sense. This verse does not exhaust the list of them in due consideration of brevity. But the very term *saṃsāra* or worldly life comprises them all.

When verse 13 of *Anubandham* (*Supplementary Verses*) is read juxtaposed this verse, the import becomes clearer. While the ego is all the evil there is, egolessness is all the good there is. All that is good and worthy of reverent cultivation, belongs to egolessness. This verse catalogues all the good that fructifies on the extermination of the idea of 'I am the body', viz, charity, *yajña* (sacrifice), austerity, virtuous ways of living, yoga, *bhakti*, heavens, wealth (of truth), peace, grace, silence, release, deathless death, knowledge, holy renunciation, *mukti*, bliss – all are but snapping of the notion, 'this body is the Self'.

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Exegesis: If the ego – the individual *jīvā* – is real, it must continue to appear in deep sleep as well. On the contrary, in waking and dream states alone the ego manifests itself by seizing hold of a body that is but part of the world appearance. Therefore it is evidently a myth. So long as the truth behind this is not sought it will keep on spreading its expanded manifestation of the *saṃsāra* is the burden of this verse.

25. uruppaṯṟi yuṇḍā muruppaṯṟi niṟku muruppaṯṟi yuṇḍumiha vōṅgu – muruviṭ ṭuruppaṯṟun tēḍiṉā lōṭṭam piḍikku muruvaṯṟa pēyahandai yōr.

Verse-split: *uru paṯṟi uṇḍām uru paṯṟi niṟkum: uru paṯṟi uṇḍu, miha ōṅgum; uru viṭṭu uru paṯṟum; tēḍiṉāl ōṭṭam piḍikkum; uru aṯṟa pēy, ahandai, ōr.*

Import: This ego, sans a form of its own, like a ghost, comes into being by seizing hold of a body. It stays on, holding to the form as support. Holding on to the body it thrives on the sense objects and waxes in strength. While letting one body go, it grasps another. If the truth of it is sought, it takes to its heels and goes out of its existence.

Commentary: The birth, stay and growth of the ego become a possibility only by its holding on to the form of a body. Never can it spring up or sustain itself in the absence of the form of a body. In the event of death to one form, after taking hold of another, it releases the previous form. Until this ego is rooted out, lock stock and barrel, the endless births and deaths of this transmigratory cycle of *saṃsāra* cannot be stayed.

There is but just one way to halt this cycle of *saṃsāra* and to annihilate the ego and that is the Quest of the Self by seeking the truth of the ego or its source.

Bhagavan christens this ego "a ghost sans form" meaning it is just a phantom. When a body meets with an untimely or unnatural death due to its being poisoned or murdered, the ego-mind impregnated with countless latencies of enjoyments experienced, without tenanting another body, may remain

formless and roam about as a ghost and may "possess" another living person's body. There is no difference between this 'ghost' and the ghost of the ego, its predecessor, that has been enjoying an existence prior to it.

The body that the ego clings on to need not necessarily be only a gross body. It may hold on to a subtle body too or to one that is capable of experiencing the infernal punishment meted out in hell (called *yātana* body) or even one that travels to the celestial worlds like Heaven etc. (called *ādi vāhika* body) both of which are but modified subtle bodies transformed into suitable vehicles for the purpose of undergoing the experiences of the respective worlds.

Bhagavan often used to narrate a parable to illustrate the nature of this ego called "The parable of the bridegroom's companion". At the wedding in a house an uninvited guest masquerading as an intimate friend of the bridegroom enjoyed all the attention, honour, hospitality and sumptuous feast due to the best man of the bridegroom in the bride's house as well as in the bridegroom's house. None questioned his real identity and took him at his face value. So long as no enquiry was afoot on his real identity, the impostor enjoyed life with all comfort. Once an enquiry was on about his identity, fearing exposure, he quietly gave the slip and disappeared without leaving a trace. Bhagavan used to conclude that the pseudo-self similarly rules the roost, and has its writ run all over by masquerading as the real Self so long as no enquiry is initiated. Once an enquiry – the quest of the real Self – begins, it takes to its heels, leaving no trail behind.

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Exegesis: The manifoldness of the world appearance and the world of ideas have, as their primal seed, the ego. In other words, ego itself doubles up as the mind and the world. With the dawn of the Experience of the Self as a consequence of the quest of the Self – the only means to eliminate the ego – both of these get snuffed out along with the extinction of the ego.

26. ahandaiyuṇ ḍāyi ṉaṉaittumuṇ ḍāhu mahandaiyiṉ ḍṟēliṉ ḍṟaṉaittu – mahandaiyē yāvumā mādaḷāl yādideṉḍṟu nāḍalē yōvudal yāvumeṉa vōr.

Verse-split: *ahandai uṇḍāyiṉ aṉaittum uṇḍāhum; ahandai iṉḍṟēl, iṉḍṟu aṉaittum; ahandaiyē yāvum ām; ādalāl 'yādu idu,' eṉḍṟu nāḍalē ōvudal yāvum eṉa ōr.*

Import: When the one named 'I' – the ego – is born, all else is also born along with (the world of manifold appearance and the world of ideas). When the ego is not, all these go out of existence. Hence the ego 'I' by itself is the all. Therefore, to enquire and know the truth of the ego is tantamount to giving up everything.

Commentary: The instruction *ahandaiyē yāvum ām* – the ego is all – is the point to be taken note of. The whole world and everything else is in the ego and nothing but the ego. With the extinction of the ego, as a result of the quest of the Self, all else will be got rid of in real terms is the conclusive advice. A few verses of *Anubandham* (*Supplementary Verses*) reaffirm the same which may also be read along with. This, in truth, is true renunciation and Release – the State of Deliverance –

won by the annihilation of the ego where there is no world of objects or of persons or of thoughts.

A recapitulation of the quintessence of this Chapter on Discrimination is as follows: The Experience of *jñāna* or of Being the Self is the State of Deliverance. The means to attain it is to seek the Self with an inward-turned mind. But the rise of mental thoughts poses a hurdle by obstructing the mind from homing inwards and makes it extroverted. The wrong – but firm – belief in the reality of the world is the reason for this obstacle, for we, disregarding the reality of the world in the sense it is real, regard the unreal aspects – such as names and forms – as real. Since this perception obliterates the Self, knowing the unreal aspects as unreal is the basic *sine-qua-non*. With the help of instructions imparted by a sage like Bhagavan, the very embodiment of the experience of Being the Self constantly and unswervingly, one must develop discriminative knowledge as to how the names and forms of the world, the dyads and triads, space, time and all other distinctions perceived, are all simply fabrications of the mind. Mental thoughts have the 'ego' as their seed and therefore, all these are just expanded manifestations of the ego. And with this knowledge so obtained, the *sādhak* must embark upon the quest of the Self. This verse – the last one under this head – epitomizes the entire gamut of this teaching.

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Vicāra Adhyāyam
CHAPTER ON "THE QUEST"

This chapter, though small in extent incorporates in it the *upadeśa* that can rightly be regarded as the Heart of this whole Text.

Here the term *Vicāra* or "Enquiry" has a special connotation. Enquiry, in general, means research or investigation. This implies ascertainment of the truth of an object or incident unknown by way of investigation indirectly through intellectual reasoning, logical deductions, witnesses and hearsays. But the Self is anything but indirect or a hearsay and can never be known through indirect means. We also found that conjectural guesses are, at best, fruitless. The *Vicāra* or quest that Bhagavan advocates here is quite different from this. The mind, set afire by the longing for the experience of the Self and made single-pointed and stationed steadfastly in the inward perception of seeking the truth of the Self, is *Vicāra* or quest, as advocated by Bhagavan.

Exegesis: Since the world of manifold appearance which is the expanded manifestation of the ego, conceals the Self, the form of *Sat-Chit*, from shining as It is, the quest that stamps the ego out of existence is the *sādhana* or means to obtain that experience of Being the Self. This is the exhortation held forth by Bhagavan in this verse.

27. nāṉudiyā duḷḷanilai nāmaduvā yuḷḷanilai nāṉudikkun tāṉamadai nāḍāma – ṉāṉudiyāt taṉṉizhappaic cārvadevaṉ cārāmaṯ ṯrāṉaduvān taṉṉilaiyi ṉiṟpadevaṉ cāṯṯru.

Verse-split: *'nāṉ' udiyādu uḷḷa nilai, nām aduvāy uḷḷa nilai. 'nāṉ' udikkum tāṉamadai nāḍāmal, 'nāṉ' udiyāt taṉ izhappaic cārvadu evaṉ? cārāmal tāṉ adu ām taṉ nilaiyil niṟpadu evaṉ? cāṯru.*

Import: The state where the ego-sense ('I am the body' sense) rises not, is the state wherein we are that One Reality, the Form of Being and Awareness. Without seeking and sinking in the source whence the ego rises, how can the extirpation of the ego-sense that no longer rises as 'I' be accomplished? And if the ego-sense is not extinguished, how can our Natural state wherein we are 'That' be won?

Commentary: The opening line *nāṉ udiyādu uḷḷa nilai nām aduvāy uḷḷa nilai* – 'The Pristine state where the ego-self as 'I' does not arise is the state where we are That' – strikes the keynote of the teaching by summing up in brief the whole sweep of instructions revealed so far.

As 'ego is all', the world, God and *jīvā*, all the three, rise in tow with the ego's birth. They conceal the Truth of the Self. The state of Truth, shorn of these veilings is the state of Quiescence and Peace, characterized by the non-rising of the ego.

We remain as 'That' ever and anon. Due to the preponderance of the ego-sense that expands as the manifestation of the world appearance, the Self does not shine as It is. In dream and wakeful states the 'I' rises as the 'ego-sense' and makes the Self which alone is Real, appear unreal. In deep sleep, it abides in nescience in a subtle seed form. These three states constitute the *saṃsāra* or the worldly life. The basis of all these three states is nescience and the

state devoid of nescience is termed *Turīya*, meaning, that which transcends all the three states known to us. Bhagavan reaffirms in a verse in *Anubandham* (*Supplementary Verses,* verse 32) that this State indeed is the Sole Reality while the other three, being unreal, are false. This state of *Turīya* is characterized by the extinction of the ego.

That this State, referred to, defies both thought and description is explained further in a verse yet to be seen. This can at best be described as '*nā ithi*'; '*nā ithi*' – not this; not this.

The belief that the content of Self was explained to sages like Sanaka through the medium of silence by Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti hints at this very idea. All experiences including those of the celestials occurring in the domain of the ego, with nescience as the basis, cannot stand comparison with *Turīya* which is beyond compare. The emphasis on the fundamental difference between them (*Turīya* and the other three states among which the *jīvā* keeps alternating in *saṃsāra*) by describing *Turīya* as the 'State of non-rising of the ego' (*nāṉ udiyādu uḷḷa nilai*) is to bring it within the ambit of comprehension to a certain extent.

This State is marked by the total absence of imperfections in their entirety like the mind as which the ego expands, all the flaws like the worlds and the six foes (*shatripu*) like desire etc. all of which again are off-shoots of the ego. Since it has already been clarified that It is not *pāzh* or *śūnya*, it is evident that this State is one of Fullness and Bliss – the Natural State.

When does the ego, not rising as 'I', subside? How to extinguish it by not allowing it to rise as 'I'? The answer is provided in the line *nāṉ udikkum tāṉamadai nāḍāmal nāṉudiyāt taṉṉizhappaic cārvadevaṉ?* Without scouting for

the place where it rises from, how can one gain the state of non-rising of the ego? So long as the mind does not become inward oriented, seek the Heart, the place of origin of this ego, the ego will continue to rise, expand and stall all attempts at attaining the State of *Turīya*.

Until the ego is stamped out of existence, the attainment of the Fourth State – *Turīya* – cannot become a *fait accompli* but can only be a dream is what is indicated by *cārāmal tāṉ aduvām taṉṉilaiyil niṟpadu evaṉ*. Without ensuring the loss of ego, how can one, the very form of Self, abide firmly in one's Natural state?

Since that State is spoken of as *tāṉ aduvām taṉṉilai* one's own nature – the Self – the natural state, it is clearly revealed that the State of *Turīya* is one's Natural State, the Ego-less State that is termed *Sahaja Stiti* in Sanskrit.

The phrase *taṉ izhappu* – the loss of the ego-self – the State of non-rising of I – is the elimination or the loss of individuality. This loss of individuality or the death of the ego is spoken of as 'true birth' in verse 11 of *Anubandham* with the opening line *piṟandadu evaṉ taṉ brahma mūlattē* (He who is born in his source, Brahman) and as 'death sans dying' in verse 13 of *Anubandham* that goes *dāṉam tavam vēḷvi* (charity, austerity, *yajña*... are all but snapping of the sense of 'I am the body').

By the observance of the practice mentioned here, diving deep into the Heart – the place of the origin of the ego – the mind gets exterminated and egolessness is the result achieved. The extinction of the mind alone is the state of *Turīya*. The state of latency of the mind (where the mind is in temporary suspension) cannot be a means for achieving this state. Latency of the mind is induced by sleep, swoon

and specific practices of *Hatha Yoga*. Just as by merely going to sleep the State of *Turīya* cannot be won, the other methods aimed to achieve latency of the mind are equally futile in leading one to that state. Those who secure latency of their minds by other yogic practices will continue to remain as ignorant as they were before they went into the state of latency. The mind, wide awake, must be interiorized, reach its source and dissolve itself in the Self – the Substratum. That a highly resolute mind alone can accomplish this will be the theme in the verse that follows.

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Exegesis: The *sādhana* of 'seeking the place of origin of I' as couched in the terms *nāṉ udikkum tāṉam adai nāḍudal* in the verse is delineated here by Bhagavan with the help of an illustration that makes it explicitly lucid.

28. ezhumbu mahandai yezhumiḍattai nīril vizhunda poruḷkāṇa vēṇḍi – muzhuhudalpōṟ kūrndamati yāṟpēccu mūccaḍakkik koṇḍuḷḷē yāzhndaṟiya vēṇḍu maṟi.

Verse-split: *ezhumbum ahandai ezhum iḍattai, nīril vizhunda poruḷ kāṇavēṇḍi muzhuhudalpōl kūrnda matiyāl pēccu mūccu aḍakkikkoṇḍu, uḷḷē āzhndu aṟiyavēṇḍum, aṟi.*

Import: Just as one dives deep into water restraining breath and speech to locate, seek and recover an article fallen into it, so too should a seeker, with the firm resolve to find whence does the ego arise as 'I', dive deep into the Heart with a sharp and single-pointed mind restraining thought and breath and know It.

Commentary: Harmonizing the contents of the mind and directing the ingathered and concerted energies in a single current Heart-ward, seeking the place of the origin of the ego and to sink within is indeed the *sādhana* delineated here.

The reason for mentioning a place called 'Heart' as the seat of the Self by the terms *uḷḷē āzhndu* – diving deep – is to instruct that the mind must be turned within towards the Self. Inwardness is just being Self-ward renouncing exteriorization or directing the concentrated energies of the mind Home-ward and the mind becoming one (united) with *sādhana*. In truth, there is no place as the seat of the Self as the Heart. The Self Itself is spoken of as the Heart. The real Heart is just Consciousness in its innate purity and the Self is that Consciousness.

The total resolve and the perseverance to reach and sink in the Source, mentioned here, is the dynamic and key element for the ever awake mind to subside in the Self. If sleep overtakes one during the process of enquiry, the quest becomes barren and profitless (for sleep robs Consciousness).

Inwardness is nothing but the mind renouncing attachment to all that is unreal like the body and all that stands in the way of winning that state. By this process of renouncing so, the power of breath, namely, the vital air hitherto traversing through the body is indrawn and is reunited with the mind, thus enabling it to dive into the Heart. This is clearly indicated by the use of the words *pēccu mūccu aḍakkik koṇḍu* – restraining thought and breath.

But practices such as *prāṇāyāma* need not actively or consciously be pursued for restraining the breath. Bhagavan advises that if the resolve to find the Truth of the Self be keen, steadfast and strong enough, breath subsides automatically

on its own. Verse 24 of *Anubandham* (*Supplementary Verses*) the last of the verses on the 'Heart', translated from *Yoga Vāsiṣṭham* by Bhagavan speaks at length about this: *ādaliṉāl aṟivu mayamām śuddha idayattē* (Therefore by the practice of merging the mind in the Heart, the destruction of *vāsanās* and the subsidence of vital air will automatically be accomplished). Bhagavan highlights an effective strategy for suspension of breath and that is by the method of watching the natural breathing process. A steady and continuous watch, it will be found, slows down the breath gradually till it subsides finally. The analogy employed to drive home the point is the practice of diving in water seeking an article that had fallen into it. The mind, made single-pointed, must plunge into Heart – the seat of the Self – with all the mental strength it can muster.

A pearl diver, weighted with a stone round his waist, dives deep into the sea and grasps the most precious pearl; so should a seeker fortify his resolve with the stone of dispassion and determination, must dive Heart-wards and gain the treasure – the Self, is the exhortation of Bhagavan.

Single-pointedness of the mind which is but channelizing all mental energies into a single current bound Heart-ward, and dispassion, strengthen the mental resolve, no doubt. But these, in truth, are not two but just one and the same. The mind, dissipated by the countless distracting thoughts, becomes weak and scattered and hence ill-equipped to reach the seat of the Self – the Heart. Intense dispassion and a fervent yearning for the greatest gain of the Experience of the Self alone will endow the mind with the requisite strength to gain *jñāna*. An *Upanishadic* dictum declares *nāyam ātma balahīnena labhyo* – This Ātman cannot be gained by the weakling. A seeker possessed of these two qualities,

namely, dispassion and longing for the Experience of the Self which can rightly be termed as perfect devotion – is called a *dhīra* – a valiant one or a spiritual hero. Bhagavan has defined this 'valour' of such an aspirant in these significant derivatives: *dhī* (धी) stands for the intellect and *ra* (र) for the skill to protect and guard that intellect from being frittered away in running in many directions on a variety of thoughts and various temporal affairs. Bhagavan assures though by way of a query, "What other valour than curbing the vanity of thoughts is required to see one's Self?"

If the mind stays anchored firmly in the pursuit of *sādhana*, a mysterious force rises from within and takes possession of the mind, leads and lands it in the Heart, is the revelation unfolded by Bhagavan.

Aspirants who are highly matured and free from love of individuality hand themselves over to the Power of this force unreservedly without resisting it in the least and then the finite ego is swallowed up by the Infinite. But others, less ripe and ready, not yielding themselves to Its sway, become extroverted. Therefore it is imperative that the acquisition of the requisite competence and ripeness by devotion, dispassion and discrimination is a must for a serious aspirant.

Bhagavan used another analogy often to bring home this truth. Just like the dog that had been separated from his master and had strayed away, keen on rejoining him, seeks him guided by his scent and following the scent of the master's footsteps, finally reaches him, so should a seeker holding on to the light of awareness of the Self, "I am" in the ego-sense – the only infallible guide to the heart – reach the Self. The ego is the shadow of the Self. The 'I am' in it is the light of Consciousness – the only element of Reality – that is mixed

up in the ego-sense. This 'I am' is constant and unchanging and is, therefore, like the master's scent for the dog.

The perfect devotion, namely the firm and unwavering resolve to reach the Self is the very life breath of this *sādhana*. That it is only devotion that grants the greatest of all gains, namely, the Experience of the self, has been asserted by Bhagavan in an assorted verse that reads *ariyādi idara jīvaradu* – In the Heart Lotus of all beings beginning from Vishnu, the Absolute Awareness shines as the Self. There it is mentioned that with a heart melting away in loving devotion and reaching the Heart Cave, the Content-Supreme can be perceived by the gnoetic Eye of wisdom.

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Exegesis: It is totally fallacious to assume that the State of Deliverance can be won by practices like meditation by the mind, disregarding the direct path of plunging into the Heart mentioned here. Some practise the *nidhidhyāsana* of *Soham* – the uninterrupted meditation with the stance of 'He, I am'. The real worth of the contemplation with this stance, as an efficacious means to usher one into the State of Deliverance with certainty is revealed by Bhagavan in this verse.

29. nāṉeṉḏṟu vāyā ṉavilāduḷ ḷāzhmaṉattā
ṉāṉeṉḏṟeṅ gundumeṉa nāḍudalē – jñāṉaneṟi
yāmaṉḏṟi yaṉḏṟidunā ṉāmaduveṉ ḏṟuṉṉaṟuṇai
yāmaduvi cāramā mā.

Verse-split: *'nāṉ' eṉḏṟu vāyāl navilādu, uḷ āzhmaṉattāl 'nāṉ' eṉḏṟu eṅgu undum eṉa nāḍudalē jñāṉaneṟi ām aṉḏṟi, 'aṉḏṟu idu, nāṉ ām adu' eṉḏṟu uṉṉal tuṇai ām; adu vicāram āmā?*

Import: Without mouthing aloud 'I', but diving deep into the Heart and seeking the place from where the consciousness as 'I' rises, is the direct path of winning the Awareness of the real Self. But the mere contemplation, "This body I am not; That Brahman AM I", no doubt is helpful as an auxiliary tool to that direct path but can that, by itself, be the direct means, namely, the quest of the Self?

Commentary: The *sādhana* spelt out in the traditional Texts of the ancient *Vedāntic* lore seems to be quite different. They speak of *śravaṇa* (hearing), *manana* (reflection) and *nidhidhyāsana* (meditation) as the standard practice to be gone through for the dawn of *jñāna*. Hearing from a competent preceptor (Guru), the *mahāvākya* (The Great Dictum) and its real content explained and instructed in by him, is *śravaṇa*. The knowledge thus obtained is not firm. *Manana* is the ascertainment of the Truth, 'I indeed am that Brahman', contained in that Great Dictum by inferential reasoning. *Nidhidhyāsana* is the ceaseless contemplation of the content of that statement. The *akaṇḍākāra vritti*, that blossoms out of this contemplation wipes out the nescience in all its entirety and *jñāna* or Knowledge, it is believed, then shines in all glory and effulgence. This type of *sādhana* is but a mental practice involving the 'triad' of the meditator, the object of meditation and meditation. The intent and purpose of the quest is to make the mind that is awake, achieve quiescence. Therefore while *vicāra* or quest is a direct means *nidhidhyāsana* is not one such. But, none the less, it may, as a preliminary means, help and guide the quest of the Self, reveals Bhagavan.

Bhagavan reiterates in this verse the description of the 'direct' path. *nāṉ eṉḏru vāyāl navilādu uḷ āzh maṉattāl nāṉ eṉḏru eṅgu undumeṉa nāḍudal* – Not chanting aloud 'I', 'I', but with the mind diving deep within to enquire, seek and know whence this 'I' arises – clearly emphasizes that with silence of speech and mind, the mind must delve deep within the Heart seeking the source of I – the element of consciousness in the ego – and this is the direct path of *jñāna*. This is the import. Meditation is the business transacted by the medium, the mind, and this cannot be tantamount to mental quiescence. Hence this process of meditation will not facilitate the sinking of the mind in to the Heart.

The main objective of *vicāra* is the annihilation of the mind which can never be accomplished by this contemplation. However prolonged be the period of this meditation, the contemplating mind will never cease to exist and go out of existence. The mind, actively pursuing its occupation of meditation, underwrites its longevity by gifting to itself a fresh lease of life, whereas in the quest of its own reality, the mind perishes by itself.

The sheer force of the strong mental resolve to find, with certainty, the place whence 'I' arises constitutes the very life of the quest which is missing in the foregoing contemplation. If only the strength of this mental fortitude to win the experience of one's Natural State be strong and continual without any let, the need for such contemplation becomes redundant.

Further this contemplation consists of two components as indicated by the use of two terms namely 'I' and 'That' and as such it becomes twin-headed. A two-headed contemplation (with two objects of meditation like 'That' and 'I') will not

aid the mind in the requisite plunge within. In contrast to this, the single-pointed contemplation solely as 'I' is ideal and more helpful in guiding the plunge into the Heart, declares Bhagavan.

The Quest detailed here is interpreted in two ways, as 'Who am I?' and 'Whence am I?'. But as the quest, in essence, is the same in both the types, both can be practised. 'Who am I?' seeks the Self as 'What is the Truth of me?', 'Whence am I?' seeks the Self as "What is the source of the sense of 'I' in the ego?".

The experience gained as a result of this quest is the State of Deliverance called *Sahaja Stiti* or one's Natural State. It comes to be experienced even while one is in the body. Though the body and mind appear to survive, this is only from the perception of the 'others'. In the perception of a *jñāni* they are unreal and hence do not exist.

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Anubhava Adhyāyam
The Chapter on the Experience
(of 'Being That')

The Bliss of the experience of being the Self or *mukti* arises after the annihilation of the mind by *vicāra* or the quest of the real Self. Speech and thought being functions of the mind, that Blissful State with a non-existent mind defies description by speech and falls beyond the purview of thought. Not even a *jīvanmukta* can depict it as being such and such. That even Lord Śiva Himself, as Dakṣiṇāmūrti, could indicate this to sages such as Sanaka only through the unspoken word, indicates that it is a state marked by the extinction of the mind and that silence is the sole language of the Self. Yet, as that state stands in stark contrast to that of the one bound, by bringing to the fore the distinctions between a *mukta*, the one released from bonds and the bound *jīva*, we can well surmise that It is a state to be desired and cherished most by all of us.

Exegesis: The first verse of this Chapter declares how the Self – the form of Awareness – shines when the introverted mind, in its quest of the Self, abides in the Heart.

30. nāṉā reṉamaṉamuṇ ṇāḍiyuḷa naṇṇavē
nāṉā mavaṉḏṟalai nāṇamuṟa – nāṉāṉāt
tōṉḏṟumoṉḏṟu tāṉāhat tōṉḏṟiṉunā ṉaṉḏṟuporuḷ
pūṉḏṟamadu tāṉām poruḷ.

Verse-split: *'nāṉ ār' eṉa maṉam uḷ nāḍi, uḷam naṇṇavē nāṉ ām avaṉ talai nāṇam uṟa, 'nāṉ nāṉ' āt tōṉḏṟum oṉḏṟu tāṉāha, tōṉḏṟiṉum 'nāṉ' aṉḏṟu, poruḷ; pūṉḏṟam adu; tāṉ ām poruḷ.*

Import: When the mind introverted by being engaged in the quest 'Who am I?', reaches the Heart, the ego 'I', with its head bowing down slips into subsidence. Then, there appears another as 'I-I' of its own accord; yet though It so appears, It, indeed, is not the spurious ego but I; That is the content of Truth, All-Full, the Real *Svarūpa* of the Self.

Commentary: The mind, by the quest of 'Who am I?' seeking within and turning inward, (*uḷam naṇṇavē*) and on reaching and subsiding in the Heart, (*nāṉām avaṉ talai nāṇam uṟa*) the *chidābhāsa*, 'I' – bowing his head out, (*nāṉ nāṉāt tōṉḏṟum oṉḏṟu tāṉāha*), a self-effulgent Awareness as 'I, I' springs up and shines on Its own. (*tōṉḏṟiṉum nāṉ aṉḏṟu*) Though It so appears, It is not the ego-sense. (*poruḷ pūṉḏṟam adu*) That is the Transcendental Whole and Full Content. (*tāṉām poruḷ*) 'That' – the Self – is the Truth.

It is declared here that in the experience of being the Self, the Awareness of the Self shines as 'I-I'. By so declaring, it is revealed that It is contrary to what shines as the 'I' – the awareness of the *chidābhāśa* – which is but the idea of body as the 'Self' as 'I am this'. The *chidābhāśa jīva* is one who appears by superimposing the Self on any one of the five sheaths that constitute the body. The significance of saying that in the experience of the Self, the effulgence of the Self shines as 'I-I', is that there is no such superimposition whatsoever, for all the sheaths have been stripped off and the Self – the form of Awareness – shines solely in all Its native purity. The verse that follows elucidates this content very lucidly. Thus it has been made clear that the Awareness of the Self is Unbroken or Impartite.

The state of Experience explained above is called *Nirvikalpa* Samādhi which is often described as twofold, namely, *kevala nirvikalpa* samādhi and *sahaja nirvikalpa* samādhi. In *kevala nirvikalpa* samādhi the mind, along with ego, subjected to temporary subsidence, rises up again due to *prārabdha* and ramifies into various modes of thought waves, springs back to life and action, thereby falling a victim again to a life of bondage, namely, *saṃsāra*. On the other hand, in *sahaja nirvikalpa* samādhi, the Natural State (*sahaja*), the mind, along with the ego, is dissolved in the Self, losing its identity and form in the Self and gets established as the very form of Self. There can be no resurrection for a mind that is so lost in the Self and therefore the bondage has snapped once and forever. This is verily the State of Deliverance and one who abides in that state is indeed a *jīvanmukta*.

Despite being in *kevala nirvikalpa* samādhi for a long spell of even hundreds of years, the mind of such a yogi may still arise, get revived, resulting in indulgence in action the mind is habituated to. A parable is often narrated to illustrate this fact. A yogi, after rising from years of being immersed in *kevala nirvikalpa* samādhi, called upon a disciple to fetch some water but before the disciple could bring it, he lapsed into samādhi again. Meanwhile centuries had rolled away. The suzerainty of the Hindu Empire was lost to the Great Moghuls and subsequently the Moslem Rule also fell before the might of the British Empire. Finally when he came out of his samādhi, his first thought was the recollection of his request to a disciple to fetch water and he was heard to call out, "Have you brought me some water?". The mind, having attained latency in *kevala nirvikalpa*, springs up again, comes alive, and resumes its habit of activity from where it was left

off. But in *sahaja* the mental quiescence is achieved by the final extinction of the mind.

The mind of one in *kevala nirvikalpa* samādhi is like the mind of one in sleep and he can neither act nor accomplish anything in the transactional world. The basic difference between the two is that while in sleep the mind is immersed in nescience, in *kevala nirvikalpa* it is engulfed by the Light of Awareness. Bhagavan illustrated this difference with an analogy. Like a bucket let down by a rope into the well where it remains submerged but can be pulled up again by the rope, the mind in *kevala nirvikalpa* samādhi becomes active again to pursue the worldly life. But the mind of a yogi in *sahaja* samādhi is like a river that has emptied itself into the ocean to become one with it and can never resume its course as a river again. Otherwise they, *kevala* and *sahaja*, both appear to be similar.

The one established in *sahaja* is ever awake and can transact the affairs of the empirical world without getting dislodged from his Natural State where he is ensconced forever. He can bestow instructions on disciples and what is ever more significant can even rule over an empire. But whatever be the activities that he is engaged in, he in truth, is untouched and unaffected by them. The so called 'mind' of a sage is not a mind but the form of pure Awareness and as such he is free from the proclivities of the mind and mental distortions. This is made even more explicit by a few verses in *Anubandham* as well.

The pilgrimage of life has not come to an end for a yogi who inheres in *kevala nirvikalpa* samādhi. Therefore by the pursuit of further practice, he must achieve the annihilation

of the mind along with the proclivities it is impregnated with and attain inherence in the *Sahaja* or *Natural State*. *Sahaja* alone is the State of Deliverance. Only that *jīvanmukta* who has attained the *Sahaja* state is competent to inform others on the truth of that State and impart authentic instructions on ways and means of achieving it, while the other who flips in and out of such a trance cannot vouchsafe such guidance, for he is yet to free himself from bondage. A *jīvanmukta* who abides firmly and unswervingly in the *Turīya* state can teach, answer and instruct without ever getting dislodged from that state; but the other cannot.

The verses to come explain in great detail the nature of the *jīvanmukta* who abides in *sahaja nirvikalpa* samādhi.

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Exegesis: That sage, a *jīvanmukta*, is a *krita kritya* – the one who has accomplished all there is to – and that his state of being that transcends the domain of the mind cannot be ascertained by intellectual discussions and conjectures are the two facts dwelt in the verse that turns up next.

31. taṉṉai yazhittezhunda taṉmayā ṉandaruk
keṉṉai yuḷadoṉ ḏriyaṯṟudaṟkut – taṉṉaiyalā
taṉṉiya moṉḏṟu maṟiyā ravarnilaimai
yiṉṉadeṉ ḏruṉṉa levaṉ.

Verse-split: *taṉṉai azhittu ezhunda taṉmaya āṉandarukku eṉṉai uḷadu oṉḏru iyaṯṟudaṟku? taṉṉai alādu aṉṉiyam oṉḏrum aṟiyār; avar nilaimai iṉṉadu eṉḏru uṉṉal evaṉ?*

Import: What is there that is yet to be accomplished for a *jīvanmukta*, who in unity with Truth – the Self –

enjoys Bliss and peace in that state (beyond relativity) that arises by consuming his ego? He is unaware of anything other than the Self. How then can we either conceive or comprehend his state (that is mind-less) by our minds?

Commentary: A *jīvanmukta* is a native of the land of Ego-less State and therefore mind-free. His mind has been dissolved in the Self and has become one with Brahman – the Self. Therefore the mind of a sage is just not a mind but the Supreme Reality Itself. The form of Brahman is *Sat-Chit-Ānanda*; hence the form of a *jīvanmukta* too is verily That. All the happiness that one can possibly desire or aspire for is contained in the form of Bliss, Brahman. The happiness experienced by the denizens of all the three worlds is but mere droplets of that Bliss. Therefore, a *jīvanmukta* is often described as *āpta kāma* – one whose desires have been fulfilled in their totality; his is the enjoyment of all possible desires at one stroke. There is nothing that he needs to desire; therefore he is desireless. He is a *nitya tripta* – ever-contented. There is nothing that can dent his contentment. Only desires can dent or tear into one's contentment and he is desireless for, the desirer, the ego, has ceased to exist.

In his perception, which is one of sole and solid Awareness, there are no objects worthy of being desired. Only the gross and subtle bodies are the breeding grounds of desires. But a sage has no idea of Self in the gross and subtle bodies. They, besides having ceased to incite desires in him, have faded into the realm of unreality and are no longer real for him. Hence, he is *akāma* – beyond the pale of desires. The will and wish to desire happiness and avoid unhappiness is only for those with the sense of 'Self' in the gross and subtle

bodies. The Self indeed is the very form of happiness for him and he, forever revelling in That, is called *Ātma rāma* – one who is Self-filled. Bereft of resolutions and the sense of agency or doership as 'I am the doer', he is not bound by any injunction to perform any action. The *Śāstraic* injunctions do not bind him. The words 'duty' and its correlative 'right' are meaningless to him. Indulgence in acts of *adharma* (wrongful or sinful deeds) prohibited by codes of conduct is a manifestation of the presence and powerful influence of the ego. The egoless nature of a *jīvanmukta* itself is indeed hailed as the *dharma* in a verse in *Anubandham* (*Supplementary Verses*). Hence no *Śāstraic* commandments are required to dissuade him from embarking on *adharmic* actions. This is the import of the opening line of this verse. By this, he is called *krita kritya*, one who has accomplished all there is to accomplish.

Nor does a *jīvanmukta* willfully desire to desist from performing actions. If ever he does engage himself in the performance of an action he derives no benefit – earthly or otherwise – from it. The difference between the states of a *jñāni* and an *ajñāni* is due to the presence or absence of the ego-sense.

Thus it has been made very clear that the distinction as 'oneself' and 'others' springs up from the ego-sense. The statement *taṉṉai alādu aṉṉiyam oṉḏṟum aṟiyār* – other than the Self, they are unaware of anything else – clearly reveals that for a *jñāni* who is egoless differences never manifest themselves. That the opinion of some that he perceives non-difference in difference is misconceived and incorrect has already been explained. That content is brought out here as well.

The state a *jīvanmukta* abides in ever and anon is egoless and without a mind. How can one with mind conceive or comprehend that state? Hence that is called *atītam* – Beyond all the states known. This is the substance of the line *avar nilaimai iṉṉadeṉḏru uṉṉal evaṉ* – who can comprehend his state?

The *Vedāntic* declaration (*Viveka Cūḍāmaṇi*) "If one who experiences and knows the Truth of his own Self directly, non-mediated by any instrument as 'This is my Form', for whose desire and for what gain would that one suffer identification with the body and its sequel, the yearning?" is a true pen-picture drawn of this state. A *jīvanmukta*, we found, may even perform actions. But performances of actions and remaining still and actionless are both the same to a realized sage. If ever he engages himself in any action, his actions espousing great finesse and expertise far out-do those of others in matters of execution and nicety, for he is free from mental blemishes like desire and fear. By virtue of these qualities both the sobriquets *akarta* (non-performer) and *mahākarta* (Master performer) fit him. His state is the sleep of Bliss.

He is an *akarta* or 'non-doer' because he is bereft of the sense of agency – the feeling 'I perform these actions'. Verse 30 of *Anubandham – sēymai uḷam ceṉḏru kadai kēṭpār pōl* (like listening to a story with a mind that has wandered far away, a sage's mind devoid of latencies, though apparently in action is not really engaged in any act) throws further light on this topic. As all actions are executed to the point of perfection, he is a *mahākarta*.

As the *jīvanmukta* is unaware of anything other than the Self, he is characterized by 'equality of vision'. This content

is further clarified in verse 38 of *Anubandham* that goes *tāṉ aṉḏṟi yāruṇḍu?* – who is there, apart from the Self, if one only abides ever as the Self in that Blissful Natural State. This clearly sets forth that those who praise and those who vilify are both the same for a *jñāni*. The exposition on the State of *Sahaja* by Bhagavan in 'Spiritual Instructions' included in *The Collected Works* is worth reading in this context.

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Exegesis: The verse that succeeds brings out the difference between a seeker who practises the contemplation with the stance 'That – I am' and a *jīvanmukta* who ever abides as 'Thát' in the experience of the unity of Brahman and Ātman.

32. adunīyeṉ ḏṟammaṟaika ḷārttiḍavun taṉṉai yeduveṉḏṟu tāṉḏṟērn dirāa – dadunā ṉiduvaṉḏṟeṉ ḏṟeṇṇalura ṉiṉmaiyiṉā leṉḏṟu maduvētā ṉāyamarva dāl.

Verse-split: *'adu nī' eṉḏṟu ammaṟaikaḷ ārttiḍavum, taṉṉai edu eṉḏṟu tāṉ tērndu irādu. 'adu nāṉ, idu aṉḏṟu' eṉḏṟu eṇṇal uraṉ iṉmaiyiṉāl, eṉḏṟum aduvē tāṉāy amarvadāl.*

Import: While the *Upanishadic* statements that preach the principle of Ātman hail loud and clear 'THAT THOU ART', an aspirant, not getting established as 'That', by seeking the truth of the Self and entering the Heart through the quest, meditating instead, 'That Brahman am I and not this body', is due to want of strength of mind. Does not that Content Beyond reside as the Self within, ever and anon?

Commentary: The *mahāvākya* of the *Upanishad* 'TAT TVAM ASI' (THAT THOU ART) is erroneously understood as a teaching offered as a method for *nidhidhyāsana* – the practice of contemplation – spoken of earlier. But the true import of this *mahāvākya* is to instruct the seeker to turn the mind Self-ward, dive in and sink into the heart. There, in the stark thoughtlessness marked by the extirpation of the ego et al, he should abide as the residual form that survives as the Self called Brahman. Therefore the true significance of the deliberation of the principle of Ātman contained in this *mahāvākya* is to abide as the Self by the quest of the Self as explained so far and the *Upanishadic* utterance therefore, is not an injunction to contemplate on the teaching. The tenor of the dictum of the *mahāvākya* is further clarified in detail by Bhagavan in verse 8 of *Anubandham – idayamām guhaiyiṉ nāppaṇ* with the meaning as follows: In the centre of the Heart-cave shines Brahman by Itself, the one without a second, as 'I-I' the Ātman. Enter the Heart with a mind sinking within, either by seeking the Self or by a mind, which along with breath, sinks into the Heart. Thus by reaching the Heart become an *Ātmanishta* – firmly poised in it as the Moveless essence. All *Upanishadic* utterances like the *mahāvākyas* only refer to the state of experience of Being the Self, or simply 'Being' and do not advocate any method for the practice of meditation.

A seeker striving to attain this 'Natural State' must be a *dhīrā* – full of heroism or valour – to accomplish this aspiration. It was explained earlier that Bhagavan often stressed the need for this 'heroism' and he defined it as the indomitable strength of mind in curbing the vanity of thoughts and the undaunted courage to sink into the Heart. Only the

one who suffers from want of such courage and a weak mind resorts to the contemplation with the stance 'THAT AM I'. The reward of such labour is not the winning of the state of stark thoughtlessness with the death of ego but the bestowal of a fresh lease of life on the ego.

Need we quantify and transcribe in words the enormity of the difference between a *jīvanmukta* anchored in the Self and an *ajñāni* who resorts to the practice of such type of meditation? Bhagavan designates the nature of a *jīvanmukta* by the use of the terms: *eṉḏṟum aduvē tāṉāy amarvadāl* – since at all times he dwells as that Brahman or Self. That the contemplation of the Self by a *jīvanmukta* is akin to a man's contemplating 'I am a man', states a verse that follows (verse 36). Thus the significant point to note is that the state of Being the Self is one; the state of practising contemplation is quite another.

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Exegesis: Will not the very terms of 'the State of Knowledge' at once imply that the form of Ātman, the Self, is an object of knowledge or an object known? However, far from being an object of knowledge, it is the eternal subject, with the Awareness 'I-I', and a sage himself is verily the Self. Is this not the *upadeśa* of Bhagavan?

Therefore the statements that 'A *jñāni* is a knower of the Self' and one called an '*ajñāni* is ignorant of the Self' and need to know the Self are both meaningless misconceptions is elaborated here. The Self, being the subject, the sole Reality, is never an object and also It being the Self is never unknown.

33. eṉṉai yaṟiyēṉā ṉeṉṉai yaṟindēṉā
ṉeṉṉa ṉahaippuk kiḍaṉāhu – meṉṉai
taṉaiviḍaya mākkaviru tāṉuṇḍō voṉḏṟā
yaṉaivaraṉu bhūtiyuṇmai yāl.

Verse-split: *'eṉṉai aṟiyēṉ nāṉ,' 'eṉṉai aṟindēṉ nāṉ', eṉṉal nahaippukku iḍaṉ āhum. eṉṉai? taṉaiviḍayam ākka, iru tāṉ uṇḍō? oṉḏṟāy aṉaivar aṉubhūti uṇmaiyāl.*

Import: The two statements 'I do not know myself' and 'I know myself' invite derision. Why? Are there two Selves to make oneself an object of knowledge to oneself? Is it not the Truth experienced in common by all alike that the Self – the Ātman – is but one?

Commentary: We have often heard Bhagavan say that from the angle of *jñāni*'s perception i.e. at the Absolute level of perception, there is none christened as 'an *ajñāni*'. If so what is the import of the instruction "Know Thy Self". The counter is that, this is the standard format adopted while imparting *upadeśa*, though that is not in tune with the principle of the Supreme Truth. The spiritual wisdom born of the experience of the *jīvanmuktas* forms the bedrock of *Advaitic* Vedānta. But the vast majority of the disciples or aspirants are novices in the spiritual field, and are not fully matured and lack competence. The process of *upadeśa* itself is conducted in the plane of duality, for the minds of the disciples are still in the realm of duality, being impregnated with predilections of dual notions. Experience is, indeed, non-dual. However, many instructions, seemingly contradictory to the experienced Truth that is *Advaitic* in nature, may have to be imparted, to start with, per force. But as one goes along, the wrong and contrary attitudes, the outcome of such instructions, are corrected step-by-step and finally and

in due course, and at the appropriate time, the teaching that the non-dual being that transcends speech and mind is the True state is implanted. That ultimate – and decidedly conclusive – *upadeśa* is administered in this verse and also in the verses further ahead.

The Self neither knows nor is known. Just 'To Be' is indeed the truth of the Self. The unknowability of the Ātman is due to its being the Self. This truth, which is also the burden of verse 12, has been made clear there by the statement *aṟivaṟiyāmaiyum aṯṟadu aṟivāmē* (Awareness or Knowledge is devoid of both knowledge and ignorance). This verity was also often revealed by Bhagavan by utterances Gospel-like during various discussions.

A *jīvanmukta*, not being other than That but being that very Self, whose ego and mind having been consumed, cannot say, 'I know the Self'. How then can he say, 'I do not know'? This is the content of the first two lines of the second verse of *Arunachala Ashṭakam* composed by Bhagavan. Bhagavan states that the use of terms like 'I know', 'I do not know' are highly improper and incorrect in the Realm of the Self. [For how can one, after experiencing the Truth of Non-Duality, in that supreme state, remain separate from the Supreme Being to be named a sage?] If it is in accord it would imply that there are two selves. That it is not so is the truth experienced by all. This is highlighted by Bhagavan in this verse.

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Exegesis: What is the creed or faith of a sage? Is he a *dvaitin* (a dualist) or an *advaitin* (a non-dualist) or a *visishtādvaitin* (a qualified monist)? The answer is provided in the verse that succeeds.

34. eṉḏṟu mevarkku miyalbā yuḷaporuḷai yoṉḏṟu muḷattu ḷuṇarndunilai – niṉḏṟiḍā duṇḍiṉ ḏṟuruvaruveṉ ḏṟoṉḏṟiraṇ ḍaṉḏṟeṉḏṟē caṇḍaiyiḍaṉ māyaic cazhakku.

Verse-split: *eṉḏṟum evarkkum iyalbāy uḷaporuḷai oṉḏṟum uḷattuḷ uṇarndu, nilai niṉḏṟiḍādu 'uṇḍu' 'iṉḏṟu,' 'uru' 'aru' eṉḏṟu, 'oṉḏṟu,' 'iraṇḍu', 'aṉḏṟu' eṉḏṟē caṇḍai iḍal māyaic cazhakku.*

Import: The worldlings, who, not realizing 'That Content' in the Heart and abiding as That which alone shines at all times in the hearts of all living creatures as the truth of their real Self, indulge in intellectual disputes proposing, 'It is', 'No, It is not', 'It is with form', 'No, It is formless', 'It is one', 'No, It is two', 'It is neither one or two', do so due to the delusion caused by nescience.

Commentary: The term *matam* (normally used to connote 'religion') means 'to think', 'to believe'. All theological doctrines and dogmas held on to dearly by followers of various religions are just thought forms only and nothing else and hence no creed can be a faithful representation of the Reality which is neither in the creeds nor in the books. Contrary to all these creeds that are purely mental, *Advaita*, the experience of the non-dual Self, is *amatam*, that cannot be thought of and ascertained by the intellect 'as such and such'. So do the *Upanishads* declare stridently. *Kenopanishad* announces, "He knows That content who knows that That content is not an object of thought; He to whom it becomes an object of thought knows It not." (Chapter 2, Verse 3). Since the Experience of the real Self, not being indeed a religion, the Lord, appearing as Dakṣiṇāmūrti, exemplified it

through a silent commentary to sages like Sanaka. Bhagavan also reaffirms that *Advaita* is not a religion but the State of Experience. Experience of the Self is real; not beliefs about the Self. A *jīvanmukta* is one whose mind has died. His mind, having been dissolved in Brahman, has become Brahman Itself – Pure and Unvariegated Consciousness.

In that state of egolessness there is neither a mind to think nor are objects to be thought of.

Therefore the question 'what is the religion of a *jīvanmukta*' does not arise at all. That which is thought of by the mind is *parokṣa* – merely theoretical – devoid of experiential knowledge. *Jñāna*, on the other hand, is ever the very form of experience – subjective – most intimate and direct. However some *advaitins*, considering even *Advaita* as a Faith, intending to differentiate it from the above experience, give the nomenclature *parokṣa jñāna* to it (which is but an oxymoron as explained earlier).

Bhagavan has remarked that this is akin to calling a *rākṣasa* (a demon) a *puṇyajanan* (one of blessed birth). The truth that religions are the exclusive forte of *ajñānis* or ignorant ones becomes obvious from this.

An *ajñāni* is one who has not experienced and known Brahman that ever remains as the very Self in him by seeking within. It is, indeed, he, who, arriving at diverse conclusions dictated by the vagaries of a fickle mind, indulges in futile and cantankerous wrangles. All such actions, we are told, are the handiwork of *māyā* that envelops him. Until and unless the real Self is realized these controversies will continue to rage but for the realized one, they have come to an end.

Diverse are the religions based on the dogmatic theologies like "Self is; It is not; It is with Form; It is Formless; It is one; It is two; It is neither one nor two". The corresponding religions these dogmas belong to are Theism, Atheism, *Saguṇa*, *Nirguṇa*, *Advaita*, *Dvaita* and *Viśiṣṭādvaita*.

Why then bracket *Advaita* which, strictly speaking, is not a religion, along with other religions? It is mainly to expose the inexactitude of the stance that views *Advaita* as a religion by some. These sectarians though aware that it is strictly not a religion but a state of experience, yet, unable to attain that experience of abiding as That, deem it a religion like any other. The exhibition of zealous adherence to it by them, professing themselves to be *advaitins*, is equally untenable.

The *upadeśa* or instructions bestowed by a *jīvanmukta* will be commensurate with the ripeness and competence of the seekers or disciples. For a *jīvanmukta* all religions are equal and the same and he perceives no difference in them. He is a *samarasi* – one who discerns the truth or the Essence in all of them. Neither the religion, whatever it be, nor the tenets advocated by it are of any consequence. What is significant is the *sādhana* prescribed in that creed. Seekers would do well to hearken to Bhagavan's exhortation to earnestly pursue the practice of *sādhana* advocated by one's religion, deliberately eschewing disputations and ultimately attain the experience of the Non-dual State – the *summum bonum* of all spiritual experiences.

In addition excessive and passionate attachment to one's own religion is an obstacle on the road to Release – *mukti* – because it is a form of *vāsanā* – a predilection resulting in strong attachment. Among the three potent predilections or latencies, namely, *deha vāsanā* (proclivities

born of attachment to the body), *lokha vāsanā* (predilections born of excessive attachment to the world) and *śāstra vāsanā* (latencies born of attachment to *śāstras*), *śāstra vāsanā* is the most damaging one and even this must be relinquished is the exhortation of all *Vedāntic* Texts. This verse too calls upon the seekers to renounce this *vāsanā*.

When the ego and the mind are alive and active, the Truth of the Beyond does not shine but It does shine in all Its glory in the egoless and mind-less State of Deliverance. Hence to claim and flaunt 'I possess the Right Awareness of the Self' before the ego and mind are stamped out is wrong, reeking of impropriety, is what is to be rightly construed.

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Exegesis: People who are incapable of comprehending the glory and greatness of a *jīvanmukta* often seek to know whether he possesses any exceptional excellences or manifests thaumaturgic powers called *siddhis*. Bhagavan tells us that what they normally regard as *siddhis* are unreal and the true *siddhi* or accomplishment is the firm abidance in the Self who is ever present in the Heart.

35. siddhamā yuḷporuḷait tērndiruttal siddhipiṟa siddhiyelāñ soppaṉamār siddhikaḷē –niddiraiviṭ ṭōrndā lavaimeyyō vuṇmainilai niṉdṟu poymmai tīrndār tiyaṅguvarō tēr.

Verse-split: *siddhamāy uḷ poruḷait tērndu iruttal siddhi; piṟasiddhi elām soppaṉam ār siddhikaḷē; niddirai viṭṭu ōrndāl avai meyyō? uṇmai nilai niṉdṟu poymmai tīrndār tiyaṅguvarō, tēr.*

Import: The only true, perfect and imperishable *siddhi* or attainment is to abide in one's Natural state by knowing and becoming one with the Self in the Heart which we already are. All the other so-called *siddhis* are like the *siddhis* seen and experienced in dreams, quite untrue. Will the *siddhis* attained in dream remain real on waking up? No, they will not. Likewise, will the *jīvanmuktas*, firmly poised in the real form, the Self, having woken up from the slumber or nescience – this *māyā* – be ever enamoured by the lure of these *siddhis*?

Commentary: The term *siddhi* means an "invaluable gain". We are instructed here that the acquisition of the grandeur of the Self is the real *siddhi*. While It is everlasting and permanent, the others, being part and parcel of the world illusion in the realm of *māyā*, are ephemeral and transient.

The winning of the Self is an enduring gain for we are the Self, is the truth. Being the Self is our innate nature. If perchance this nature were to get veiled by another the concealment by itself can cause no change to this inherent nature. When the slumber of nescience that veils our nature and the dream of wakefulness that appears in that sleep are rendered naught by the dawn of *jñāna*, that innate Nature, once unveiled, has no possibility of getting enshrouded again.

In truth this Self we always are and even now, whether we are aware of it or not. Hence, there is no need for us to become the Self afresh or to win the Self. Hence the Self or Ātman, the Content Real, is described here as an ever-secured *siddhi* or a gain accomplished. Anything obtained afresh will certainly be lost as it is not inherent. *Siddhis* are not naturally our own; therefore they will not be ours forever and in due

course of time they are sure to be lost. What is not permanent cannot be real. Excepting the experience of the Self, all else are false *siddhis*.

Only the non-discriminating ones consider the eight-fold *siddhis* like *aṇimā* as 'attainments'. Such notions are possible only in the domain of nescience and they never appear real for sages, who ever-abide in the Transcendental state called *Turīya* – beyond all the known states. It is a state of eternal wakefulness where the real shines as real and the unreal dissolves into nothingness.

An ignorant man alternates among the three states of sleep, dream and wakefulness in the prolonged sleep of nescience. What he thinks and experiences as 'wakefulness' is not really wakefulness but just a dream, though a little prolonged (just as dreamer while dreaming construes the dream experiences as real, an ignorant one considers the dream of the *māyā* world as real and not as an unreal dream). The *saṃsāra*, the world, the dualities, the *siddhis*, heaven and hell, the celestial worlds, the divine *Sathya loka*, *Vaikunta* and *Kailāsa*, all occur only in that dream during the sleep of nescience. These dream manifestations appear real and the true Self appears unreal due to nescience.

While a *jñāni* who has awakened to Reality from this slumber of ignorance will not regard them as real, an *ajñāni*, who is still under the spell of the sleep of nescience, may value them as real and may even take up occult yogic practices aspiring to acquire and enjoy the possession of such powers. These deluded *ajñānis*, we may hold, are those not desirous of waking up from the dream of *saṃsāra* but desire to acquire and possess these accomplishments or *siddhis* and

enjoy a life manifesting them even as they are in the sleep of nescience plunged into the dream of *saṃsāra*.

It has already been revealed how these accomplishments acquired in the world which is but a dream of *māyā* are unreal akin to the dream-like gains. Bhagavan clearly emphasizes here that the *siddhis* which the non-discriminating men strive for and run after are illusory and false by calling them *soppaṉamār siddhigaḷ* – dreamlike gains.

We do have dream experiences of *siddhis* like being air borne which did appear real as long as the dream lasted but on waking up we become aware of the illusory and unreal nature of the dream stuff. The *siddhis* won by hard yogic practices are equally ephemeral and unreal. Bhagavan, by the query *niddirai viṭṭu ōrndāl avai meyyō?* (on waking from sleep are they real?), affirms that they are not real for a sage who has woken up from the sleep of nescience or *ajñāna*. Just as a dreamer, on waking up from sleep, perceives the dream *siddhis* as unreal, so also the sages, who have woken up to Reality from the sleep of nescience, are not deluded into mistaking them for real.

The entire purport of this verse is to warn the earnest seekers who strive for release from *saṃsāra* by the attainment of greatest *siddhi* of the Knowledge of the Self not to be waylaid and led astray by the lure of these *siddhis*. It will be worthwhile to note here verse 16 of *Anubandham*: *cittattiṉ śāntiyadē siddamām mukti* – The everlasting peace and the tranquillity of the stilled mind is the ever-attained state of *mukti*.

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Exegesis: Some do venture to ask whether a *jīvanmukta* will practise contemplation of the Ātman (*Ātmānusandhāna*); will he reflect unceasingly as *Soham* – 'He, am I'? Bhagavan explains in the ensuing verse that *Soham-bhāvana* (attitude) is only for an aspirant and not for an accomplished sage – a true *siddha* or a realized *jñāni*.

36. nāmuḍaleṉ ḏṟeṇṇiṉala nāmaduveṉ ḏṟeṇṇumadu nāmaduvā niṟpadaṟku naṯṟuṇaiyē – yāmeṉḏṟu nāmaduveṉ ḏṟeṇṇuvadē ṉāṉmaṉida ṉeṉḏṟeṇumō nāmaduvā niṟkumada ṉāl.

Verse-split: *nām uḍal eṉḏṟu eṇṇiṉ, 'ala, nām adu' eṉḏṟu eṇṇum adu, nām aduvāy niṟpadaṟku naltuṇaiyē ām; eṉḏṟum 'nām adu' eṉḏṟu eṇṇuvadu ēṉ? 'nāṉ maṉidaṉ' eṉḏṟu eṇumō? nām aduvāy niṟkum adaṉāl.*

Import: So long as the notion 'I am this body' persists the meditation with the stance 'this body I am not; I am That' is a helpful support to gain That state where we abide as That. Why should we forever ceaselessly contemplate 'We are That Brahman'? Does anyone meditate 'I am a man'? Does not the Self ever abide as That?

Commentary: It is just ignorance to keep feeling 'I am this body'. Those who strive to get rid of this ignorance must practise as an antidote the quest of 'Who am I?' seeking and diving within with an inward-bent mind. Otherwise *uraṉ iṉmaiyiṉāl* (due to lack of strength of mind), one must contemplate constantly 'I am not this body; I am that Brahman'. This meditation, carried on by the mind, is a mere mental activity. The mind pulsates only as long as the ego

exists and enjoys life. Since, with the extinction of the ego, the mind gets dissolved out of existence, who, then – and also how – will meditate in that state of egolessness?

An illustration is provided to reveal how it is impossible for a sage to reflect with *Soham* attitude and that is *nāṉ maṉidaṉ eṉṟu eṇumō?* (Does one always keep thinking 'I am a man'?). In other words he that practises the meditation 'I am That' is not a sage but a seeker. If a sage meditates 'I am That' it would be like a man meditating 'I am a man'. While being a man is an ever-experienced reality for a man, being the Self, merely the form of Being and Awareness, is a reality experienced eternally and naturally by a sage. In the world it is proper for one to remember something he has forgotten. No man ever forgets his being a man and hence meditation as 'I am a man' is impossible for him. Likewise the Truth of the Self is never forgotten even once by a sage and he shines ever as the Self. How then can he contemplate 'I am Brahman' and that too with a mind that is non-existent and an ego that has perished long back once for all?

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Exegesis: A sage's state of Experience of being the Self is non-dual, without an 'other'. And that it is attainable through spiritual endeavours is held forth as a part of the standard procedure adopted for *upadeśa*. Yet the differences like dualities or the pairs of opposites that appear in the state of nescience are never real. The Absolute Truth of the Transcendent content, the non-dual Self, as the sole Reality is experienced in the Ego-less State. The idea that duality, existing prior to the attainment of *jñāna*, is now extinct at the time of Experience of a *jñāni* is refuted and set at rest in the ensuing verse.

37. sādhakatti lēduvitañ sāddhiyatti ladduvita mōdukiṉḏṟa vādamadu muṇmaiyala – vādaravāyt tāṉḏṟēḍuṅ kālun taṉaiyaḍainta kālattun tāṉḏṟasama ṉaṉḏṟiyār tāṉ.

Verse-split: *sādhakattilē duvitam, sāddhiyattil adduvitam, ōdukiṉḏṟa vādam adum uṇmai ala; ādaravāyt tāṉ tēḍuṅkālum taṉai aḍainda kālattum tāṉ dasamaṉ aṉḏṟi yār tāṉ?*

Import: The doctrine that advocates that duality is real while practising the *sādhana* to gain the Self but after the completion of *sādhana* and attainment of *jñāna* there is non-duality is not true. Who else is he but the tenth man of the parable both when he himself was anxiously searching for the tenth man assuming him to be lost and when he ultimately found himself as the tenth man as he has always been?

Commentary: Truth is viewed from two levels, the *vyāvahārika*, the empirical, and the *pāramārthika*, the Absolute, which is the ultimate standard of reference. While the Absolute alone is the sole verity, the empirical truth sans reality is called 'real' only by way of courtesy. The *pāramārthika satyam* or the Absolute Truth, is never expounded at the very commencement of *upadeśa*. Gradually, and step by step, all the distinctions and pluralities are taught as belonging to the realm of *māyā* fit to be negated and finally *māyā* itself is rejected as being unreal and ultimately the Absolute Truth of pure Non-dual Self is taught.

The concepts or notions of guru, disciple, *upadeśa*, *sādhana*, *siddhi* et al are confined to the world of nescience.

But in the perception from the Absolute level none of them exists.

Some doubt and aver that prior to the dawn of *jñāna* and during the reign of nescience all distinctions born of dualities are real. They opine that in the state of experience of the Self, all differences and *dvandvas* getting extirpated, the Pure Non-dual Self may remain as the sole survivor but prior to the dawn of enlightenment all pluralities are a matter of experience and therefore until attainment they must all be deemed as real.

'Duality is the Truth eternally and there is no state where they stand negated' is the creed of the dualists. That their doctrine is wrong is proved beyond doubt by the experience of being the Non-dual, All-Full, Self of the sages. Both the dualist argument and the conciliatory argument of contending duality in *sādhana* and non-duality in attainment are disproved here, one explicitly and the other implicitly. The phrase *ōdukiṉṟra vādam adum uṇmai ala* with the emphasis on the word *um* (also) clearly clubs them both together.

All the distinctions of dualities confined to space and time are mere superimpositions on the Self which alone is the substantive Truth. This verity was declared and advocated in the first invocatory verse itself as well as in the first verse of this Text namely *nām ulaham kāṇḍalāl*, and it is worth recalling them here. It was clearly revealed by way of an illustration that the picture of name and form, the perceiver, the basic screen and the revealing light – all these are He Himself. That the perceiver and the spectacle are illusory appearances like the pictures in a motion picture; and the substantive Truth of Being (corresponding to the screen), the Light of Awareness, is the sole verity is the substance of that verse.

The perceiver is none but just the knot – *chit jada granti* – and that he is not other than the phantom ego has been highlighted earlier.

Since distinctions like 'seer' and 'spectacle' and other differences that the world is riddled with are all experienced, let us deem them to be real when they appear but when they are rendered naught by the practice of *sādhana* let the Non-dual Self be deemed the Absolute reality, is the contention put forward by some. The contenders who so opine presume the absolute reality of time while saying "when they appear", forgetting the fact that the distinction of time – like space – is an unreal entity and their argument falls flat for want of support, lacking basis.

If it is disputed that duality is real, now, before the dawn of *jñāna*, then it must endure forever for the definition of *Sat* or Truth postulates that It should be unaffected by time; and that which has an end is not *Sat* or the Truth or the Real is the conviction.

The demonstrated conclusion, therefore, is that duality operating in space and time is unreal always while non-duality, with neither a beginning nor an end, is the sole verity.

Further if an origin or beginning be attributed to non-duality by asserting that it arises on the destruction of duality, it will not be real, for having been subject to a beginning, it may also go out of existence and it will not remain forever. Non-duality is the very nature of the Self and therefore It is Eternal. And there is no Truth contrary to this.

The non-duality of the Real Self is true always – both when It is being sought by the quest and also when realized. It is not one that is accomplished by means of a *sādhana*. If

it is the effect of *sādhana*, it will not be enduring for with the removal of cause it will go out of existence. Therefore non-duality is ever-attained is the confirmed content of the Vedānta *Śāstras* in their entirety. *Advaita* is not what is yet to be; It ever is.

The illustration offered here is by way of parable of 'The Discovery of the tenth man'. It runs as follows: Ten men from a village while travelling together had to cross a river on the way. On reaching the other bank they counted themselves to ensure whether all of them had reached the other bank safely. But since each man, in the process of counting left himself out, they thought there were only nine and that the tenth was lost. While they were bemoaning the loss of the 'tenth man', a wayfarer, on enquiring the cause for their grief, counted and found that all the ten were physically present. In order to convince them that all the ten were there, he bade one of them to count. He, as before, counting only the others and leaving himself out said "only nine are here". Then the wayfarer pointed out his folly of failing to count himself and made him realize that he was the missing 'tenth man'. Relieved of their grief, they were happy that the 'tenth man' had been found.

This 'tenth man' was not born anew. He was the 'tenth man' all along. He, that was the tenth man, after the discovery, was the 'tenth man' even before when he failed to count himself. He did not become the 'tenth man' later on. Likewise the Non-dual Self is ever non-dual. It is not the product of any *sādhana* but an ever-attained reality. "Non-duality is the very nature of the Self" is the teaching here.

The term 'always' used in statements like "Duality is *always* unreal; Non-duality is *always* real", may appear to

be seemingly true in the sense of the term encompassing all the three divisions of time like past, present and future. But as was disclosed in verse 16 that goes *nāmaṉḏṟi nāḷēdu? nāḍēdu?* (What are time and space excepting us... We alone are; Time and space are not) time itself is totally an unreal entity. Hence Non-duality, being transcendental, is beyond time and not confined by it, is the sense in which this should be understood. That all statements that proceed on the assumption of the reality of time run counter to the truth of the Real Self and the experience of Being the Self should never be lost sight of.

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Exegesis: That a *jīvanmukta* is not bound by the duty to perform action as others has been explained already. It is often believed that since actions already performed cannot lapse without their consequences being exhausted, further embodiments may become necessary for a *jīvanmukta* to experience the fruits of such actions and even if this be not so, they aver that the left over portion of the *prārabdha karma* (current karma) responsible for the present embodiment will have to be experienced till the end of the present embodiment.

This verse puts to rest once for all and unequivocally all such doubts by stating that heaps of karma in their entirety having been burnt by the fire of *jñāna*, a realized sage is released totally and forever from the bondage of *karma*.

38. viṉaimudaṉā māyiṉ viḷaipayaṉ ḏṟuyppōm
viṉaimudalā reṉḏṟu viṉavit – taṉaiyaṟiyak
karttat tuvampōyk karumamūṉ ḏṟuṅkazhalu
nittamā mutti nilai.

Verse-split: *viṉaimudal nām āyiṉ viḷai payaṉ tuyppōm. 'viṉaimudal ār' eṉḏṟu viṉavit taṉai aṟiya, karttattuvam pōy karumam mūṉḏṟum kazhalum; nittam ām mutti nilai.*

Import: If we are the agent of actions (even in the state of Deliverance) the fruits of actions will have to be experienced by us. When by the enquiry "Who am I, the doer of deeds?" seeking the Self and on realizing Its Truth, the sense of doership and the ego perishing along with all the three *karmas* (*sanchita*, *prārabdha* and *āgami*) wither away. This is the State of Deliverance – Eternal and Timeless.

Commentary: The fond attachment to the sense of agency, in the sense of "I performed actions; I am the performer now; I will be the performer of actions" is a thought-wave that arises in the mind-lake. When the ego gets extirpated as the result of the *sādhana* of *Ātma Vicāra*, Quest of the Self, all the ramifications of this ego-sense, namely, mind and all its attachments get annulled. All the off-shoots of the ego derive their life-force and thrive from the attachment to the sense of agency. As long as the ego exists they pulsate with life and the death of ego sounds the death knell of all of them. This is the burden of this verse.

This very theme is further elaborated with an illustration in verse 33 of *Anubandham* namely *sañcita vākāmiyaṅgaḷ* – just as one out of three wives cannot remain unwidowed after the demise of the husband, so when the sole doer, the ego, the cause of the three types of karma dies not one of the *karmas* will remain. Hence the *śāstraic* declaration that even *prārabdha karma* will not impact a *jīvanmukta*. From the perception of the people of the world a *jīvanmukta* may

appear to be seemingly afflicted by the *prārabdha karma*. Therefore the *Upanishadic* statements declare that *prārabdha karma* will get expended only by way of experience of the fruits of it. That the *prārabdha karma*, in truth, in the *jñāni*'s perception, does not impact him, is the view. The *raison d'être* of this assertion is as follows: With the dawn of *jñāna* the nescience of the ego perishes. This nescience is but the causal body. With its demise, the subtle body or mind that is infused with life by the causal body and the gross or physical body become extinct in the *jñāni*'s perception. But in the perception of the people of the world, the subtle and gross bodies of a *jñāni*, not ceasing to exist, continue to appear. Therefore in the perception of such ill-informed people, the residual *prārabdha karma* may appear to yield its fruits. As per the enunciation that the form of a *jñāni* is but the "Infinite Eye", it is solely the form of "Being and Awareness". The causal body is responsible for the mutual superimposition between the Self on the one hand and the gross and subtle bodies on the other. In the event of the extinction of the causal body itself no such superimposition is possible and in the absence of the superimposition the 'experience' of fruits of actions ceases to operate. As the Self is untouched by anything, no one, in truth, suffers ever from the bondage of *karma*; hence that the bondage seems to exist is the outcome of mental delusion.

Prārabdha can wreak no change in a *jñāni*, for he is one who is anchored in his own Natural state free of all the three bodies. As the gross and subtle bodies continue to appear – as a concession to the unenlightened souls unable to grasp the Absolute Truth – the *Upanishads* declare that *prārabdha* alone will remain.

As a *jñāni* is totally bereft of the sense of 'doership' all his 'actions' called *Āgami* will not fructify and the residual *sanchita* gets liquidated. Hence a sage has no more rebirths none, whatsoever. All the actions of a *jñāni* should be deemed to be those of God. He is the very embodiment of God and the Truth we all seek.

There is no real difference between a sage and God. The appearance of unreal difference is due to the presence of the ego and with its annihilation even the seeming appearance of difference is erased. Even the statement that the state of Deliverance is ushered in not after the fall of the body but immediately on the loss of ego will not be in perfect accord with the Supreme truth. The earlier verse (*sādhakattilē. . .*) spoke of non-duality even during the *sādhana*. Therefore this verse culminates with the statement *nittamām mutti nilai* – "the State of Deliverance is forever – Transcending time, It is Timeless" thus providing an apt finale to the exposition of this Supreme Truth.

Though a *jñāni* has no rebirth some Texts state that a few of them assume embodiment for the accomplishment of certain missions conducive to the welfare of mankind. They are called *ādikārika puruṣas* (men with an authority and mission) and Sages like Vyasa and Vasishta belong to this class. But their experience of *jñāna* is in no way impacted or challenged either by such embodiments or the activities they perform then. Viewed in this light even the Lord or *Īśvara* is but an *ādikārika puruṣa*, executing the functions of creation, preservation and destruction, being the very form of *jñāna* and therefore bereft of 'I' and 'mine', yet remains unattached to and untouched by these activities.

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Exegesis: The Truth that emerges clearly by the emphatic assertion in verse 37 that "Non-duality alone is true at all times", is that except the Non-Dual Self, everything else is a myth. It follows, then, that the duality of bondage and release too is a myth. That *bandham* is real now, in the state of nescience, but with the dawn of enlightenment it stands negated is not true from the ultimate point of reference is enunciated in this verse.

39. baddhaṉā ṉeṉṉumaṭṭē bandhamutti cintaṉaihaḷ
baddhaṉā reṉḏṟutaṉṉaip pārkkuṅgāṟ – siddhamāy
nittamuttaṉ ṯṟāṉiṟka niṟkādēṟ bandacintai
mutticintai muṉṉiṟku mō.

Verse-split: *'baddhaṉ nāṉ' eṉṉum maṭṭē bandha mutti cintaṉaihaḷ; 'baddhaṉ ār' eṉḏṟu taṉṉaip pārkkuṅgāl, siddhamāy nitta muttaṉ tāṉ niṟka, niṟkādēl banda cintai, mutti cintai muṉ niṟkumō.*

Import: So long as the thought 'I am bound' remains, do thoughts of bondage and deliverance from bondage subsist. When the unitary experience of being the Self is won by the quest of 'to whom is the bondage?' the Eternal, Ever-Free Self alone remains yielding no room for thought of bondage to arise and the thought of 'liberation' also ceases to survive.

Commentary: Bondage and release are mere notions of the mind, both being correlative and co-existent. As long as one of the pair persists, the other also prevails and both enjoy the same degree of 'truth'. The truth of dyads, to which class this pair belongs, has already been explained and disposed off as unreal.

The ego is the basis for this pair as it is for all other pairs of opposites and sustains them with life. Their longevity also rests on the lease of life the ego enjoys. With the extirpation of the ego, both bondage and liberation go out of existence together and as they are mutually dependent on each other one cannot survive the other.

The means for achieving the extinction of the ego is seeking within by the enquiry 'Who am I?'. The 'I', it is revealed here, arises from the thought of bondage. If one were to ask oneself 'to whom is the bondage?' the answer would be 'to me'. The next poser would be, 'Who am I?'. This, in brief, was indicated by the query 'Who is the one who is bound?'.

No *jñāni* ever feels – after the extinction of the ego – that there was bondage for him earlier and that it stands snapped now. 'I am, by nature, ever-free' is the only feeling that he shines with is clearly revealed by the phrase *siddhamāy nitta muttaṉ tāṉ niṟka* (the Eternally Free Ātman ever abiding as ever-attained). The Self Alone, of the nature of Eternal Release, survives; all else ceasing to be, like the dream stuff of one who has woken up from slumber.

The verse *jaḍa uḍal nāṉ eṉṉādu* (this inert and insentient body will not say 'I') mentioned that both 'bondage' and the bound *jīva* are but the *cit jaḍa granthi* (the knot of spirit and matter); hence both are simply myths is made clear. The thought of 'deliverance' which is due to the belief in 'bondage' is purely in the realm of nescience. Therefore bondage and freedom, the pair, spoken of in the course of instruction to disciples in the initial years are not absolute verities is transparent. All the objections raised by *Dvaitins* to the *Vedāntic* doctrine that bespeaks of the non-dual experience

spring from the absence of awareness of this secret. May the worthy disciples of Bhagavan be saved from the delusion of these arguments!

Two points of special significance are brought to the fore by this. A *jīvanmukta* or a sage never looks upon himself as the one freed and the others as still bound in the trammels of nescience. In this state of Deliverance, as stated earlier, he is aware of none except the Self and in his perception there is 'none other'. That being so, how can there be men bound or men released? Secondly the sage is never aware of having become free or having been afflicted with bondage once. Once, when Bhagavan was asked when did he attain enlightenment, he answered, "Nothing new has happened to me; I am as I have always been". Enlightenment or freedom is not to the Self. *Jñāna* and *Mukti* are the very nature of the Self. Since the *chidābhāsa jīva* is himself a myth, there can be no question of 'deliverance' for him.

What, then, is the import of the word *Mukti* (Release)? That It is the state free of thoughts of bondage and freedom, is the Truth.

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Exegesis: Another erroneous idea is often entertained by some concerning a *jīvanmukta*. The popular notion is that since a plurality of sages as 'this *jīvanmukta*', and 'the other' appear, they could not have achieved identity in entirety in the form of pure Brahman and therefore they must have retained some vestiges of *upādhi* – an adjunct – either a subtle

body or a distinct individuality. So do some aver and argue. They state that the subtle body possessed prior to the dawn of *jñāna*, attains divinity after Enlightenment and Release, acquiring countless wonderful powers of extraordinary genre, enjoying the bliss of Brahman and will remain forever as a separate entity. Yet others contend that *jñānis* have no form, true indeed; but if they wish and will they can assume forms. While ignoring both the views would be the better part of discretion, some *Advaitins* finding this view untenable and unacceptable, counter it by saying that the Self, Released (a *jīvanmukta*), has indeed no form whatsoever.

The intent and purport of this last verse is to sift and explain the ultimate Truth from among these contentious tenets.

40. uruva maruva muruvaruva mūṉḏṟā
muṟumutti yeṉṉi luraippa – ṉuruva
maruva muruvaruva māyu mahandai
yuruvazhitaṉ mutti yuṇar.

Verse-split: *uruvam, aruvam, uruvaruvam, mūṉḏṟu ām, uṟum mutti eṉṉil uraippaṉ; uruvam, aruvam, uruvaruvam āyum ahandai uru azhidal mutti, uṇar.*

Import: If it be said that the Release attained by a *jñāni* is with form, without form, both with and without form, of these three contentions I shall declare the Truth. Know that, the utter extinction of the ego 'I' that investigates whether *mukti* is with form or without form or with both, is True Deliverance, indeed.

Commentary: Those who believe in the superstitious idea that the true nature of Release can be determined with certitude by delving deep in logical arguments, counter-arguments and debates are the *ajñānis* – the ignorant ones – totally under the sway of ego and who have not experienced the state of Deliverance themselves. The ego that holds them captives under its powerful spell is verily the mind. It is indeed this ego mind that attempts to determine the principle of the Self that is ever *aparokṣa* or the subject of direct experience, indirectly (*parokṣa*) with the help of inferential logic or scriptural statements or both.

The Self is the content of Experiential Awareness – content of *aparokṣa*; never is It *parokṣa*. None ascertains one's own being by inferential reasoning. One's 'Being' is a truth ever experienced by one. Can knowing it by inference be knowledge?*

Therefore it is a folly to attempt to know the form of Release by the mind. The ego mind will never taste Release directly because deliverance is nothing but the destruction of

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* An occidental philosopher called Descartes ascertained the existence of the self by the reasoning "I think; therefore I am". This, from what has been explained above, is wrong will be clear and it is a wrong procedure. Ātman is never known by inference for it shines in its own effulgence.

Bhagavan ridiculed this assertion in the following statement that was recorded by Lakshmana Sarma.

"The existence of their own Self is inferred by some from mental functioning, by the reasoning 'I think therefore I am'. These men are like those dull-witted ones who ignore the elephant when it goes past and become convinced afterwards by looking at the footprints."

(*Sri Ramanapara Vidyopanishad*, verse 166)

that very ego that so attempts to know and ascertain *mukti*. Conversely it implies there is no Release as long as the ego exists. The state of Deliverance is the state of egolessness. Therefore *mukti* is beyond the purview of mind or intellect and that what is known as *parokṣa* – indirectly – is no knowledge at all, was made clear earlier. Hence all disputations are fruitless is the conclusion.

As Release is characterized by the extinction of the ego, the nature of Release transcends speech and thought and this is the reason why *Vedānta Śāstras* instruct the principle of the Self by taking recourse to the process of negation such as *neti-neti*. Whatever be said and in whatever way about the Truth of the Self, it would only be contrary to the Truth and the Self would still defy description and remain untold for It is known only by actual experience.

However, let us analyze as to which of the three contentions is true. That the argument that advocates form – a distinct separateness – is totally wrong is a foregone conclusion for it contradicts the teaching that the Self is beyond description.

The other that propagates the view *uruaruvam* – with and without form – implying essentially that a *jīvanmukta* is formless yet can assume one, if he so desired – is no better than the earlier one. In fact both can be grouped under one head. The resolve to wish for a form while remaining without a form is not possible. Further to so wish and will, a mind – some subtle form – becomes a *sine-qua-non*. This view becomes untenable in view of the egoless nature of the state of Release.

It may be queried that in the absence of form or individuality there will be absence of distinctions between

many sages or *muktas*. The only possible way to counter it will be the question, "Let it be; what is that for you?". We can instinctively and unmistakably feel the instructions issuing from Bhagavan as follows: "Let the nature of *mukti* be anything. Instead of indulging in verbal combats about it, engage yourself in any one of the *sādhanas* leading to Release, gain *mukti* and then know about it yourself as a matter of direct experience as *aparokṣa jñāna*". Bhagavan emphatically declares that from the perception of the Absolute level there is no distinction whatsoever among the realized sages or *muktas*. The perception of difference exhibited by some by stating "I have had *darśan* of this sage" and "I will see that sage also" is wrong. All *mahātmas* are one and the same for the one who knows the "Mahātma" within, through a direct and non-mediated experience (as *aparokṣa*) says Bhagavan.

In this Text that reveals the Light of Reality, that pluralities and distinctions are not true from the Transcendental level is the clearly established conclusion. How will the expanded manifestations of the ego – like the names and forms, the phantom creations of an illusory mind, dyads, triads, time, space, distinction of *jīva* and *Īśvara* – survive without perishing along with ego – the father of all untruths – in *mukti* or Deliverance? Those who say 'they will' are the ignoramuses indeed.

Most importantly verse 4 of this Text *uruvam tāṉ āyiṉ*, very lucidly enunciates the truth that the ego-sense, namely, the sense of 'this body am I', is the cause for the appearance of the form and that the Self is in fact the 'Infinite Eye' – Non-dual, Whole, Full, Being and Awareness – sans a second.

Those who swear by the 'individuality' of the *jīvanmuktas* are strong supporters of the doctrine that the world is real as

such. However those who believe in the reality of the world do not merit any consideration in this Text that declares, loud and clear right from its very commencement, that the *jīva*, *Īśvara* and the world are ever non-existent. While the *jīva*, as an individual, is non-existent even now, this Text can lend no basis or support to the attempt to establish eternality to that 'individuality'.

Such protagonists avow that a *jīvanmukta* must possess individuality – a separate existence – as the body of a released sage, not dropping off, continues to move among the men of the world for sometime, performs actions like imparting instructions, etc. There can be no end to the issues relating to a realized sage. The truth of a *jīvanmukta* is impenetrable and ever an enigmatic puzzle. It is beyond human ken and any explanation attempted only eludes comprehension. In short, the least that can be said is that attempting to establish a distinction of even a hair's breadth between Brahman, the Self and a *jīvanmukta* is the height of folly. Distinctions appear on account of *upādhis* or adjuncts and are unreal. The *upādhis* are the five sheaths and the three bodies like the causal, subtle and gross. The established conclusion of Vedānta is that they are totally unreal. It has been declared, time and again, in this Text that all that is superimposed on the Self, the Substratum, become negated for a Sage and the Substratum, devoid of unreal superimposition, shines in all Its Native Purity. This is again reiterated in the verses of the *Anubandham* frequently.

It is true that the *Upanishadic* lore lends a little space for the advance of arguments that seek to establish form, formlessness and even both. It must be understood that thereby the sole intent is to kindle the desire for *mukti* in the hearts of unripe folks.

They may even be, to a certain extent, in tune with, without being contrary to the ultimate verity. The subtle bodies of *jñānis* (realized sages) may continue for sometime due to *prārabdha*. *Adikārika purushas* (men with a mission or men with authority born to accomplish great spiritual missions) and the Lord appear to be distinct individuals. This was dwelt upon in an earlier verse. All this, including the Lord, are within the folds of the *māyā*-world and are unreal from the ultimate standard of reality.

Distinctions are not real for a *jñāni*. What is real is the Self alone.

The concluding verse of *Anubandham* (*akila vēdānta. . .*) elucidates this lucidly.

REALITY IN FORTY VERSES: SUPPLEMENT

(Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu – Anubandham)

Benedictory Stanza

edaṉkaṇṇē nilaiyāhi yirundiḍumiv
vulahamelā medaṉa dellā
medaṉiṉdṟiv vaṉaittulahu mezhumōmaṯ
ṟivaiyāvu medaṉpo ruṭṭā
medaṉāliv vaiyamelā mezhundiḍumiv
vellāmu meduvē yāhu
madutāṉē yuḷaporuḷāñ sattiyamā
maccorupa mahattil vaippām.

Verse-split: *edaṉkaṇṇē nilai āhi irundiḍum iv ulaham ellām, edaṉadu ellām, edaṉiṉdṟu iv aṉaittu ulahum ezhumō, maṯṟu ivai yāvum edaṉ poruṭṭām edaṉāl ivvaiyam elām ezhundiḍum, iv ellāmum eduvē āhum, adutāṉē uḷaporuḷām. sattiyam ām. ac corupam ahattil vaippām.*

Out of the 40 verses in *Anubandham* 27 are those translated by Bhagavan from various Texts in Sanskrit. These verses in original Sanskrit have been appended at the end of each of those verses.

Import: That
In which this world in entirety stays secure
To which all this belongs
From which this entire universe appears
For which alone are all this
By which all this world is projected and
Into which all the perceived phenomena resolve
is the *Satvastu* – "That which is". That Transcendental Reality do let us enthrone in our Heart and meditate on.

Commentary: The content of the unconditioned Ātman, 'That which is', defies description. Hence, the *Svarūpa Lakṣaṇa* or the real characteristics of It is beyond thought and the range of speech. It can only be indicated as the Substratum of all the three, viz. the world, *jīva* and God. In this verse Bhagavan hails the *Satvastu* – 'That which is' – by describing its indicative characteristics called *Taṭastha Lakṣaṇa*, and such invocation is a way of ensuring an abundant measure of auspiciousness.

'edaṉ kaṇṇē..': In which the world in entirety stays firmly: Like the rope being the cause for the appearance of the snake due to nescience, 'That which Exists', is the ground and substratum for the appearance of all the world phenomena with apparent reality. The mere 'Being' or Existence or the 'intrinsic reality' of 'What is' – *uḷḷa poruḷ* – is the cause of the perceived reality of the world. The world has no existence of its own.

'edaṉadellām': To which all this world belongs: The world in its entirety being but a mere reflection of the Truth – *uḷḷa poruḷ* – truly belongs to the *Satvastu*.

'edaṉiṉdṟiv..': From which the Universe appears: The ego-sense with the erroneous perception of the Self as the body is the cause of the world appearance. As none other than *uḷḷadu* – 'That which is' – is the source of that ego as well, That Substance is the root of the world clinging on to which the world stays on.

'maṯṟivai yāvum edaṉ poruṭṭām': For which alone all else is: Experience of the phenomenal world marked by never-ending grief and misery with occasional droplets of happiness drives men to seek and attain the *uḷḷa poruḷ* ('That which is'), the source of eradication of all ills and of abiding unalloyed Bliss. This agony of *saṃsāric* life creates dispassion in one turning him into a *mumukshu* – one with a burning desire for Release.

'edaṉāl ivvaiyam elām ezhundiḍum': Whereby all this Universe is made to appear: *Vedāntic* doctrine speaks of the power of *māyā* which, not being even an iota apart from Reality, manifests itself as the world and the *jīvās*. This was spoken of in the very first line of the first verse of *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu*, in the terms *nānāvām śaktiuḷa* (possessing the power of appearing as many).

'ivvellāmum eduvē āhum': Which all the perceived phenomena become: In the same way as the rope is the ground reality for the appearance of the snake, *uḷḷadu*, is the underlying or ground reality for the world appearance. Since the world is a superimposed myth on the Substratum of Brahman, the intrinsic reality of *uḷḷadu* lends seeming reality to the world and therefore 'world' is often called 'What is'. Excepting this, in no other sense, can the world be considered 'real'. The world and Brahman, like darkness

and light, are poles apart totally contradicting each other. For the sages whose perception has become one of *jñāna*, ever from the Transcendental level, the world appearance becoming naught, the *Satvastu* – the Self – alone shines ever. This is the key to comprehend the 'Doctrine of Non-becoming' – *Ajāta Siddhāntam*. The 18th verse of *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu, ulahu uṇmaiāhum* (The world is Real, both to those who do not know and to those who know) and other verses have sufficiently highlighted the Truth that the world was never created and *uḷḷadu*, never undergoing any change, remains ever as the Pure Non-dual Content. Let this *uḷḷadu* – the primordial Content, be meditated upon as the Self in the Heart – *ahattuḷ vaippām*, 'Let us enshrine this Treasure of Bliss in the Heart' is the whole content.

Whichever extrovert, unaware of this wealth of Bliss in the Heart, wanders in *saṃsāra* with a perception oriented world-ward, is ever in want and penury. Whosoever abides as 'That', attaining oneness with It, is the one who has his desires fulfilled simultaneously all at once and nothing else is there for him to aspire for. Such a one marked by perennial contentment is never in want or penury.

What is revealed here is the golden path – the sacred means – to attain *jñāna*, called *pravilāpa dṛṣti*. This is the perception by which the effect is resolved into the cause or remembering the verity that underlies the variety. Just as froth, bubbles, droplets and waves, all rising from the ocean are all but the ocean itself; as the world of dreams and the perceiver of dreams are but the dreamer himself, to perceive 'all' as the 'Self' is *pravilāpa dṛṣti*. The latencies and proclivities of the mind, are shed off by the practice of this perception and one becomes a fit and pre-eminently competent seeker to tread

the direct path of the quest for the Self and finally sink in the Heart.

This verse is a translation of the verse from *Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*. As this verse does not find a place in *Jñāna Vāsiṣṭham* (the Tamil version of *Yoga Vāsiṣṭham* in Sanskrit), Bhagavan has bestowed this translation in Tamil.

यस्मिन् सर्वं यस्य सर्वं यतस्सर्वं यस्मा इदम् ।
येन सर्वं यद्धि सर्वं तत्सत्यं समुपास्महे ॥

(योग वासिष्ठम् 5-8-12)

yasmin sarvaṁ yasya sarvaṁ yatassarvaṁ yasmā idam ।
yena sarvaṁ yaddhi sarvaṁ tatsatyaṁ samupāsmahe ।।

(*Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*, 5-8-12)

Sat Saṅga Prakaraṇam
Chapter on "Association with *Sats* (Sages)"

Exegesis: The term *Sat* means the Absolute or Brahman. That *Satvastu* cannot obviously be an object of meditation for It transcends intellect and words. There are but forms set forth verily as forms of That – *Sat* – and worthy of being meditated upon. These find mention on the 'Chapter on Discrimination'. One such is identified as the form of a *jīvanmukta*. He, also named *Sat*, may, in all possibility, traverse the terra firma in a body, by the sheer blessed good fortune of many aspirants who approach him. Early Release may be vouchsafed by close proximity to – and association with – him. The ensuing verse espouses this verity.

1. sattiṇak kattiṉār cārbahaluñ cārbahalac
cittattiṉ cārbu cidaiyumē – cittaccār
baṯrā ralaiviladi laṯrārjī vaṉmutti
peṯrā ravariṇakkam pēṇ.

Verse-split: *sat iṇakkattiṉāl cārbu ahalum; cārbu ahala, cittattiṉ cārbu cidaiyumē; cittac cārbu aṯrār alaivil adil aṯrār, jīvaṉmukti peṯrār. avar iṇakkam pēṇ.*

Import: By the association with *Sats* – the realized sages – the leanings towards the world (links with world and worldly attachments) will drop off. With leanings removed, mental delusion (*māyā*, nescience on which the mind leans on) will get destroyed. Those who are released from mental delusions, having become one with the 'Moveless Brahman' – the Transcendental Reality –

have attained *jīvanmukti* or Liberation while alive. Seek out and cultivate their company ardently.

सत्सङ्गत्वे निस्सङ्गत्वं निस्सङ्गत्वे निर्मोहत्वम् ।
निर्मोहत्वे निश्चलतत्त्वं निश्चलतत्त्वे जीवन्मुक्तिः ॥
(श्री शङ्कराचार्यः मोहमुद्गरम् श्लो-9)

satsaṅgatve nissaṅgatvaṁ nissaṅgatve nirmohatvam ।
nirmohatve niścalatattvaṁ niścalatattve jīvanmuktiḥ ।।
(śrī śaṅkarācāryaḥ *Mohamudgaram* ślo-9)

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Exegesis: The glory and greatness of association with *Sats* is such as to cleanse the mind of its impurities, to rid it of the blemishes like nescience, make it a pure and fit instrument to practise the *sādhana* of quest detailed so far and (through which) usher him ultimately into the Land of Deliverance. One desirous of Liberation, therefore, must associate with and attach himself to a *jīvanmukta*. Such a seeker gaining competence quickly by the sheer power of the presence of such a *jīvanmukta* becomes an aspirant fit enough to pursue this *sādhana*.

The next verse also bespeaks of a similar strain of content.

2. sādhuṟavu cāravuḷañ cārteḷivi cārattā
lēdupara māmpadamiṅ geydumō – vōdumadu
bhōdakaṉā ṉūṟporuḷāṟ puṇṇiyattāṟ piṉṉumoru
sādakattāṟ cāravoṇā dāl.

Verse-split: *sādhu uṟavu cāra uḷam cār teḷi vicārattāl ēdu param ām padam iṅgu eydumō; ōdum adu bhōdakaṉāl, nūl poruḷāl puṇṇiyattāl, piṉṉum oru sādakattāl cāravoṇādu āl.*

Import: That Transcendental state which can be attained here and now by the pellucid quest of the Self, resulting in the sinking of the mind in the Heart consequent on the association with a sage, is not attainable either by the verbal *upadeśa* of preceptors, or by an intellectual grasp of the content of the Sacred lore or by the performance of meritorious deeds or by any other means.

Commentary: *Sats* are also termed as *sādhus*. The company of *sādhus* is superior to all the other means that guide one to *mukti*. The association with *sādhus* has the salutary and ennobling effect of awakening and kindling the divine *Atmic* power in the Heart, which rising up, forcibly draws the mind within Its sway, directing it to *Ātma Vicāra* detailed in the Chapter on *Vicāra* and makes it sink into the Heart. Those desirous of Release, therefore, must offer reverential and devout worship to such a *jīvanmukta* called a *sādhu*. The bond of devotion so established opens him up to the fount of the divine power of the sage which enters within, acts from there, ennobling and evolving him and ultimately lands him in the land of the Self.

A *jīvanmukta* must be regarded as but Brahman Himself and as the embodiment of the very Self that shines within oneself. He is the very incarnation of the Truth that we seek. Regarding him as one like any one of us, confined to a form,

is improper and is the result of misguided knowledge. Hailing him as the one transcending the frontiers of time and space, one should not however deem the proximity to his physical frame a necessity to offer homage to him.

न तत्गुरोर्न शास्त्रार्थान्न पुण्यात्प्राप्यते पदम्।
यत्साधुसङ्गाभ्युदितात् विचार विशदा धृतः॥

na tatgurorna śāstrārthānna puṇyātprāpyate padam ।
yatsādhusaṅgābhyuditāt vicāra viśadā dhṛtaḥ ।।

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Exegesis: If only one were to develop deep devotion to a *jīvanmukta*, the diligent acquisition and steadfast observance of other disciplines as a means to secure Release are rendered needless, for the sincerity and purity of devotion itself will vouchsafe one's Deliverance.

3. sādhukka ḷāvār sahavāsa naṇṇiṉā
lēdukkā minniyama mellāmu – mēdakka
taṇṭeṉḏraṉ mārudan tāṉvīsa vēvisiṟi
koṇḍeṉṉa kāriyanī kūṟu.

Verse-split: *sādukkaḷ āvār sahavāsam naṇṇiṉāl ēdukku ām in niyamam ellāmum? mēdakka taṇ teṉḏral mārudam tāṉ vīsavē, visiṟikoṇḍu eṉṉa kāriyam nī kūṟu.*

Import: If association with sages is assiduously cultivated, wherefore, then, is the need for the strict observances of *niyamas* (rules of disciplinary conduct for seekers)? When the cool southern breeze beyond compare blows what need is there for a fan? Tell me.

Commentary: Ritualistic worship or *pūjā*, *japa* and *dhyāna* are observances regarded as obligatory means to achieve the highest goal through purification of the mind brought about by them. Association with *sādhus* and devotion to them yields gains greater and faster than what is obtained by such traditional observances. Hence relinquishing such practices forthwith, company of *sādhus* must be sought earnestly. The contact with, and affiliation to them must be striven for, for the purpose of the furtherance of deep and strong devotion. That this devotion to them can be practised even far away from the immediate physical presence was mentioned earlier.

सज्जनसङ्गे संप्राप्ते समस्त नियमैरलम्।
तालवृन्तेन किं कार्यं लब्धे मलयमारुते ॥

sajjanasaṅge samprāpte samasta niyamairalam ।
tālavṛntena kiṁ kāryaṁ labdhe malayamārute ।।

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Exegesis: The exalted glory and magnificence of the *jīvanmuktas* is elaborated further in two more verses.

4. tāpantaṇ candiraṉāḏ ṟaiṉiyanaṟ kaṟpahattāṟ pāpantāṉ gaṅgaiyāṟ pāṟumē – tāpamuda limmūṉḏṟu mēhu miṇaiyillā sādukka ṭammā darisaṉattāṭ ṟāṉ.

tāpam taṇ candiraṉāl daiṉiyam nal kaṟpahattāl, pāpamtāṉ gaṅgaiyāl pāṟumē. tāpam mudal im mūṉḏṟum ēhum iṇai illā sādukkaḷ tam mā darisaṉattāl tāṉ.

Import: The cool rays of the moon assuage (only) heat; the celestial *kalpa vriksha* (the wish-yielding tree) removes (only) poverty; the holy Ganges destroys (only) sins; but all the three – heat, penury and sin – are simultaneously eradicated by the glory of *darśan* (a vision) of the sages beyond compare.

Commentary: There is nothing in all the three worlds that can equal the exalted glory of association with *Sats*.

That *Sat Sanga* has the power to remove poverty can be interpreted in a different way too. The penury of longing for wealth caused by want of wealth is itself removed by association with sages, for such association, by fortifying the mind with strength grants the attitude of contentment, peace and happiness, though one may still languish in poverty.

गङ्गापापं शशीतापं दैन्यं कल्पतरुस्तथा ।
पापं तापं च दैन्यं च हन्ति सज्जनदर्शनम् ॥

(सुभाषित रत्न भण्डार - प्रः 3-श्लो-6)

gaṅgāpāpaṁ śaśītāpaṁ dainyaṁ kalpatarustathā ।
pāpaṁ tāpaṁ ca dainyaṁ ca hanti sajjanadarśanam ॥

(Subhāṣita Ratna Bhaṇḍār - praḥ 3-ślo-6)

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Exegesis: This verse extols the holiness of the constant company of *sādhus* and its inestimable value.

5. kammayamān tīrttaṅgaḷ kaṉmaṇṇān deyvaṅga ḷammahattuk kaṭkiṇaiyē yāhāvā – mammavavai yeṇṇiṉā ḷāṯṟūymai yēyvippa sādukkaḷ kaṇṇiṉāṟ kaṇdiḍavē kāṇ.

Verse-split: *kam mayamām tīrttaṅgaḷ, kal maṇ ām deyvaṅgaḷ, ammahattukkaṭku iṇaiyē āhāvām. amma! avai eṇ il nāḷāl tūymai ēyvippa; sādukkaḷ, kaṇṇiṉāl kaṇḍiḍavē kāṇ.*

Import: Neither the holy *tīrthas* which are but water, nor the forms of deities made of stone or earth, can ever equal the great *Sats*. Ah! What a wonder! *Tīrthas* and deities bestow mental purity after immeasurable time but the sages bestow by a mere glance, instantly, purity of mind beyond measure.

Commentary: The deities in the temples and *tīrthas* acquire divinity and get energized and charged with power by dint of the strength of faith and sincere devotion of the *upāsakas* (worshippers). But the effulgence of Transcendental Light shines in all Its glory on Its own in a *jīvanmukta* and even a seeker with least competence is drawn, made devout, and his Deliverance is ensured. When a *jīvanmukta* lives embodied in the world one should make haste to be in his presence, and endeavour to become a fit recipient of his look of grace and must attain the Supreme State. It is not wise or proper to attempt to attain the Supreme merely by reposing inordinate faith in the efficacy of one's own mental strength and spiritual endeavours. As *Sat* is the very embodiment of Brahman, the Content Beyond, by devoutly worshipping him one can obtain his grace and get released from the bondage of *saṃsāra*, is the burden of this chapter.

न ह्यम्मयानि तीर्थानि न देवा मृच्छिलामयाः ।
ते पुनन्त्युरुकालेन दर्शनादेव साधवः ॥

(श्रीमद् भागवतम् 10-अ 48-श्लो-31)

na hyammayāni tīrthāni na devā mṛcchilāmayāḥ ।
te punantyurukālena darśanādeva sādhavaḥ ।।

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 10-48--31)

ॐ

Ātma Tattva Prakaraṇam
The Chapter on the Principle of the Self

Exegesis: The principle of the Self and the path to the experience of Being of the Self are advocated here. The Truth – the fruit of experience – that it is the Self that lights up the world and mind is spoken of first.

6. dēvaṉā rārmaṇam tēruva ṉeṉmaṇa māviyā meṉṉā laṟipaḍumē – dēvaṉī yāhumē yāhaiyā lārkkuñ surudiyā lēkaṉān dēvaṉē yeṉḏṟu.

Verse-split: *dēvaṉ ār? ār maṇam tēruvaṉ. eṉ maṇam āviyām eṉṉāl aṟipaḍumē. dēvaṉ nī āhumē āhaiyāl, ārkkum surudiyāl, 'ēkaṉ ām dēvaṉē' eṉḏṟu.*

Import: Disciple: Who is God?
Guru: He who knows the mind, is God.
Disciple: But my mind is known by me, the Self.
Guru: Therefore thou art God; also because the *śrutis* proclaim loud and clear that God is but one.

Commentary: This verse is in the form of a query (*praśna*) and a reply (*uttara*). "What is the trait that characterizes God", is the poser." "The mind knows the world including the body. The Awareness that knows that mind is God" is the reply. At this the disciple in wonder asks, "But the entity the 'I' in me happens to know my mind by the rise of awareness as 'I'. Can that 'I' be God?" The guru reassures him by his reply, "Yes that is God; It being the Awareness that is aware of everything; besides this fact is supported by

the revelation of the *Śrutis* that declares: "There is but one God within all".

को देवो यो मनोवेत्ति मनो मे दृश्यते मया ।
तस्मात्त्वमेव देवोऽसि एको देव इति श्रुतेः ॥

ko devo yo manovetti mano me dṛśyate mayā ।
tasmāttvameva devo'si eko deva iti śruteḥ ।।

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Exegesis: The same *upadeśa* is further elucidated in detail in the ensuing verse which is also in a catechetical form.

7. oḷiyuṉak kedupaha liṉaṉeṉak kiruḷviḷak
koḷiyuṇa roḷiyedu kaṇaduṇa roḷiyedu
voḷimadi madiyuṇa roḷiyedu vaduvaha
moḷitaṉi loḷiyunī yeṉaguru vahamadē.

Verse-split: *oḷi uṉakku edu? pahal iṉaṉ eṉakku, iruḷ viḷakku; oḷi uṇar oḷi edu? kaṇ; adu uṇar oḷi edu? oḷimadi; madi uṇar oḷi edu? adu aham; oḷitaṉil oḷiyum nī eṉa guru, aham adē.*

Import: Guru: What serves as light for you?

Disciple: For me, that which illumines by day is the sun and by night the lamp.

Guru: What is that light that is aware of these lights?

Disciple: The Eye.

Guru: What is that light which is aware of the eye? [What serves as light when the eye is closed or concealed?]

Disciple: The intellect. [Even blind people cognize things with the help of intellect.]

Guru: With what light is the mind cognized?

Disciple: That is 'I'. [The 'I' in the intellect is the light that is aware of the intellect.]

Quickly, the Guru remarked, "Therefore the Light of all lights art Thou";

The disciple at once responded, "Yes, verily That I am".

Commentary: The instruction that was bestowed in the first part of this Text namely, "the 'awareness of I' is the source of all world appearance" is reiterated here in a different style.

किं ज्योतिस्तव भानुमानहनि मे रात्रौ प्रदीपादिकं
स्यादेवं रविदीपदर्शनविधौ किं ज्योतिराख्याहिमे ।
चक्षुस्तस्य निमीलनादिसमये किं धीर्धियोर्दर्शने
किं तत्राहमतो भवान्परमकं ज्योतिस्तदस्मि प्रभो ॥

kiṁ jyotistava bhānumānahani me rātrau pradīpādikaṁ
syādevaṁ ravidīpadarśanavidhau kiṁ jyotirākhyāhime ।
cakṣustasya nimīlanādisamaye kiṁ dhīrdhiyordarśane
kiṁ tatrāhamato bhavānparamakaṁ jyotistadasmi prabho ॥

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Exegesis: The principle of the *sādhana* or the means for the attainment of the Experience of the Self by conjoining at the place where the 'I' shines from is conveyed in brief in the ensuing *vrittam*, a verse form.

8. idayamāṅ guhaiyi ṉāppa ṇēkamām biramma mātra maduvaha mahamā nērē yavirndiḍu māṉmā vāha vidayamē cārvāy taṉṉai yeṇṇiyā zhaladu vāyu vadaṉuḍa ṉāzhma ṉattā lāṉmāvi ṉiṭṭa ṉāvāy.

Verse-split: *idayamām guhaiyiṉ nāppaṇ ēkamām birammam mātram, adu 'aham aham' āy nērē avirndiḍum āṉmāvāha; idayamē cārvāy; taṉṉai eṇṇi āzh, aladu vāyu adaṉuḍaṉ āzhmaṉattāl āṉmāvil niṭṭaṉ āvāy.*

Import: In the centre of the Heart Cavern, Brahman, the One without a second, shines all by Itself as 'I-I', the Self. Enter the Heart by the mind seeking the Self or by a mind that sinks in along with the breath and thereby become established ever as the Self.

Commentary: The awareness of 'I' is a ray of the Light of Brahman. Isolating this awareness, 'I', segregating it from the imbroglio of the body-mind complex, trailing it with an inward-turned mind towards its Source, the Heart is reached. On so reaching the Heart, the ego perishes and then the effulgence of the Ātman shines in all Its splendour. This is the self-same *upadeśa*, indeed, proffered in the first part of this Text.

The *sādhana* spelt out here is for the mind to sink into the Heart. Two means for this end are delineated here: One is to contemplate with total resolve to reach the place of abidance of the light of I, That, itself; the second is to restrain the breath known as *kumbhaka* with the same goal, whereby the myth of the ego and the mind born of it will both cease and subside. Then the Light Pure in all its brilliance will shine and shed lustre around, is the theme of this verse.

हृदयकुहरमध्ये केवलं ब्रह्ममात्रं
ह्यहमहमिति साक्षादात्मरूपेण भाति ।
हृदि विश मनसा स्वं चिन्वता मज्जता वा
पवनचलनरोधादात्मनिष्ठो भव त्वम् ॥

(भगवान् श्री रमण महर्षि - मुक्तक त्रयम्)

hṛdayakuharamadhye kevalaṁ brahmamātraṁ
hyahamahamiti sākṣādātmarūpeṇa bhāti ।
hṛdi viśa manasā svaṁ cinvatā majjatā vā
pavanacalanarodhādātmaniṣṭho bhava tvam ॥

(Bhagavān Śrī Ramaṇa Maharṣi - Muktaka Trayam)

This verse was composed by Bhagavan first in Sanskrit to start with and then translated into Tamil by himself.

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Exegesis: The very same idea of verse 8 is cited below from a verse (Verse 46) in the *Āgamic* Text *Devi Kālottaram*.

9. ahakkama lattē yamala vacala
vahamuruva māhu maṟivē – dahattai
yahaṯṟiḍuva dālav vahamā maṟivē
yahavī ḍaḷippa daṟi.

Verse-split: *ahakkamalattē amala acala aham uruvam āhum aṟivu ēdu? ahattai ahaṯṟiḍuvatāl av vahamām aṟivē, ahavīḍu aḷippadu aṟi.*

Import: Know that That which remains as the most pure and 'moveless' awareness in the form of 'I' in the Lotus of the Heart, that very awareness as 'I', bestows

Liberation, the Abode of the Self, when the ego-sense 'this body I am' is sundered.

Commentary: There is but one lone difference between the individuality of the *jīva* that springs up as 'I' and the experience of Brahman as 'I'. The awareness that clings to the body and rises as "I am the body" is the *jīva*. But Brahman shines incessantly as Pure Awareness bereft of such attachment. It follows, then, that the only surmountable hurdle that stands in the way of reaching Home within (*mukti*) is the ego in the form of this *dehātma bhāva* – the conviction "I am the body". And that is rendered naught by a mind that sinks deep and subsides into the Heart. This is the principle of *mukti* or Release.

हृत्सरोजेह्यहंरूपा या चितिर्निर्मलाऽचला ।
अहङ्कार परित्यागात् सा चितिर्मोक्षदायिनी ॥
(श्री देविकालोत्तरम् - श्लो 46)

hṛtsarojehyahaṁrūpā yā citirnirmalā'calā ।
ahaṅkāra parityāgāt sā citirmokṣadāyinī ॥
(Śrī Devikālottaram - ślo 46)

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Exegesis: The ensuing verse dwells at length on the same theme.

10. dēhaṅ gaḍanihar jaḍamidaṟ kahameṉun tikazhviladā ṉāhañ caḍalami ṯṟuyiliṉi ḏṟiṉamuṟu namadiyalāṟ kōhaṅ karaṉeva ṇuḷaṉuṇarn duḷaruḷak guhaiyuḷḷē sōham puraṇava ruṇagiri sivavibu suyamoḷirvāṉ.

Verse-split: *dēham gaḍam nihar jaḍam; idaṟku aham eṉum tikazhvu iladāl nāham caḍalam il tuyiliṉil diṉam uṟum namadu iyalāl; kōhaṅkaraṉ evaṇ uḷaṉ? uṇarndu uḷar uḷakguhai uḷḷē, sōham (s)puraṇa aruṇagiri siva vibu suyam oḷirvāṉ.*

Import: This body is like a mudpot, insentient. It does not shine with the light of awareness of 'I'. Further, daily by the nature of our 'existing' during sleep, in the absence of the awareness of the body, this body cannot be the Self. Who, then, is he who rises as 'I'? Where does he dwell? In the Heart-Cave of those who have thus enquired and realized the Truth, the All-pervading Arunachala Śiva Himself shines as the form of Awareness with the throb of 'I-I'.

Commentary: This and the 8th verse are compositions by Bhagavan. Each verse by itself contains the quintessence of Bhagavan's *upadeśa* in its entirety in his own words. What was dwelt at great length in the first part forms the meaning of this verse too. Hence no detailed commentary is provided again.

This verse was composed by Bhagavan first in Sanskrit and then was rendered in Tamil.

देहं मृण्मयवज्जडात्मकमहं बुद्धिर्न तस्यास्त्यतो
नाहं तत्तदभेदसुप्तिसमये सिद्धात्मसद्भावतः ।
कोऽहं भावयुतः कुतो वरधिया दृष्ट्वात्मनिष्ठात्मनां
सोऽहं स्फूर्तितयाऽरुणाचलशिवः पूर्णो विभातिस्वयम् ॥

deham̐ mṛṇmayavajjaḍātmakamaham̐ buddhirna tasyāstyato
nāham̐ tattadabhedasuptisamaye siddhātmasadbhāvataḥ ।
ko'ham̐ bhāvayutaḥ kuto varadhiyā dṛṣṭvātmaniṣṭhātmanām̐
so'ham̐ sphūrtitayā'ruṇācalaśivaḥ pūrṇo vibhātisvayam ॥

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Exegesis: The verse that follows hails the glory of such a one who, reaching the Heart-Cave, remains established as one with the Self.

11. piṟanda devaṉṯṟaṉ birammamū lattē
piṟandadeva ṇāṉeṉḏṟu pēṇip – piṟandā
ṉavaṉē piṟandā ṉavaṉidamu ṉīsa
ṉavaṉavaṉa vaṉḏṟiṉamu nāḍu.

Verse-split: *piṟandadu evaṉ taṉ birammamūlattē piṟandadu evaṇ nāṉ eṉḏṟu pēṇi piṟandāṉ avaṉē: piṟandāṉ avaṉ nidam; muṉīsaṉ; navaṉ navaṉ avaṉ diṉamum nāḍu.*

Import: Know that he, who through the quest 'Whence am I?', is born in his own Source, Brahman, is indeed the one born truly. He is born forever (never to die thence); He, the Lord of saints, shines forever anew and afresh.

Commentary: The one, who is born in Brahman by the pursuit of the quest mentioned so far, becomes, indeed, Brahman himself by experiencing the unity of his Self and Brahman. This is true birth indeed freed of even the shadow of death. Excepting the birth of one who is born in Brahman, a birth is not a birth, because we are born only to die; and death is not death because we die only to be born again. Therefore all births are tantamount to death only. He is described as *navaṉ navaṉ avaṉ diṉamum* – He shines ever anew and afresh for he, being the Reality beyond time, is unaffected by time. What is new becomes old with the passage of time. Age cannot wither nor time stale his freshness. The Natural state he is established in, falls beyond the purview of human mind and that there is no difference between him and Brahman is the message conveyed.

This verse composed by Sri Lakshmana Sarma in Sanskrit has been translated by Bhagavan in Tamil.

लेभे जनिं यः परमे स्वमूले
विचार्य कस्मादहमित्युदारः ।
स एव जातः स च नित्यजातो
नवो नवोऽयं सततं मुनीन्द्रः ॥ (यार्)

lebhe janiṁ yaḥ parame svamūle
vicārya kasmādahamityudāraḥ ।
sa eva jātaḥ sa ca nityajāto
navo navo'yaṁ satataṁ munīndraḥ ।। (yār)

ॐ

Adhikāri Prakaraṇam
Chapter on "The Competent One"

Exegesis: Only that one who is matured and competent to pursue the *sādhana* can make the attainment of the Natural State – true *siddhi* indeed – a *fait accompli*. Such a one is called an *adhikāri* – a qualified seeker. Traditional *Vedāntic* Texts speak of one who possesses the wealth of the four types of *sādhana* as a competent seeker.* Of these, the first, namely, the discrimination between the Self and non-Self, has been detailed in the first part. The basic requisite for the other three, namely, the absence of attachment to the body is enunciated here.

12. izhivuḍalyā ṉeṉṉa lihandiḍuha veṉḍṟu
mozhiviliṉ bāntaṉṉai yōrha – vazhiyu
muḍalōmba lōḍutaṉai yōravuṉal yāṟu
kaḍakkak karāppuṇaikoṇ ḍaṯṟu.

Verse-split: *izhivu uḍal yāṉ eṉṉal ihandiḍuga; eṉḍṟum ozhivu il iṉbu ām taṉṉai ōrha. azhiyum uḍal ōmbalōḍu taṉai ōra uṉal yāṟu kaḍakka karāppuṇai koṇḍa aṯṟu.*

Import: Give up the thought of mistaking this detestable, vile body as the Self; Know the Self, ever the form of unceasing Bliss. Endeavouring to know the Self, intent on nourishing the perishable body is like

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* The qualification of the desire to know Brahman accrues only to men who possess:

Discrimination between the everlasting and the transient;
Dispassion – revulsion from all transient objects of enjoyment;
The six-fold wealth of *sama*, *dama*, etc.;
An intense yearning for Release.

attempting to cross a river on an alligator mistaking it for a float of wood.

Commentary: A mind saturated with worldly attachments will be oriented always towards the external world. Turning inward for such a mind is an impossibility, for the two are mutually exclusive. The root of all attachments is the attachment to the body, holding on to the body as 'I'. Abnegating this attachment is tantamount to Release from all bonds is the burden of this verse.

असन्निन्द्यमिदं देहमहं भावंपरित्यज ।
अवेहित्वं सदात्मान मखंडानंदम्व्ययम् ॥
शरीरपोषणार्थीसन्य आत्मानं दिदृक्षते ।
ग्राहं दारुधिया धृत्वा नदीं तर्तुं स इच्छति ॥

(श्री शङ्कराचार्यः विवेकचूडामणि - श्लो-86)

asannindyamidaṁ dehamahaṁ bhāvamparityaja ।
avehitvaṁ sadātmāna makhaṇḍānandamvyayam ॥
śarīrapoṣaṇārthīsanya ātmānaṁ didṛkṣate ।
grāhaṁ dārudhiyā dhṛtvā nadīṁ tartuṁ sa icchati ॥

(Śrī Śaṅkarācāryaḥ: *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* - ślo 86)

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Exegesis: That snapping of the notion of the Self as the body is rated higher than all other means to Release is authenticated by this verse.

13. dāṉan tavamvēḷvi daṉmamyō gambhatti vāṉam poruḷshānti vāymaiyaruḷ – mōṉanilai cāhāmaṟ cāvaṟivu cārtuṟavu vīḍiṉban dēhāṉma bhāvamaṟa tṟēr.

Verse-split: *dāṉam, tavam, vēḷvi, dharmam, yōgam, bhakti, vāṉam, poruḷ, shānti, vāymai, aruḷ, mōṉam, nilai, cāhāmaṟcāvu, aṟivu, cār tuṟavu, vīḍu, iṉbam dēhāṉmabhāvam aṟal; tēr.*

Import: Charity, austerity, sacrifice (*yajña*), righteousness, union with God, supreme devotion, Heavens or the Space of Awareness, wealth, veracity, tranquillity, grace, quiescence, stillness of mind, deathless death, right knowledge, renunciation, deliverance and happiness – all these are but the extinction of I-am-the-body sense.

Commentary: Charity, etc. are the means of purification of the seeker while those that are most desired by human beings are heavens and the like. The mere loss of the ego-sense contains the fruition of all these aspirations. Therefore by merely relinquishing this ego-sense the fruit of everything else is obtained.

dāṉam or charity: *Ātma Samarppaṇam* (surrendering oneself) is the highest charity of the offering of 'I' and 'mine' (the ego-sense) to the Lord who is described as *attaṉaiyum tāṉam avaṉ* – All is He. The yield of merit from this gift is limitless. It makes the seeker a fit recipient of the profound Grace of the Lord. This, in itself is the supreme *yajña* or sacrifice.

tavam or austerity: The mind becomes sullied by the desires for enjoyment – the manifestation of *dehātma bhāva*. The aim of tapas is to purge the mind of its impurities. This goal is fulfilled in its entirety by the mere giving up of body-based ego; and herein lies the greatest austerity.

dharmam or righteous conduct: But for this *dehātma bhāva* there can be no non-righteousness. Giving up this *bhāva* will wipe out *adharma* once for all. Therefore to lose this body-based ego is what *Dharma* is all about. It is *Dharma* (righteousness) in its fullness.

yogam or union: Commingling with the Lord non-dually is yoga. The main obstacle to such union is the *dehātma bhāva* which, when discarded, yields the result obtained at the culmination of yoga.

bhakti or devotion: Considering the Lord as the other of – and different from – one and offering worship to him is the outcome of *dehātma bhāva*. Devotion becomes perfect and flawless when the *dehātma buddhi* is annihilated and individuality is surrendered to the Lord at the altar of devotion.

vāṉam or heavens: The worlds of celestial enjoyments desired by human beings are subject to 'coming and going' (birth and death). It is said (in the *Gītā*) that when merits get depleted by such enjoyments which are the fruits of such meritorious deeds, beings return to the world. The world of the Self is the haven of 'no-return', and that is *cidākāśa* (space of Awareness) and *hridayākāśa* (space of Awareness in the Heart-Cave). The one with ego-sense rendered naught becomes eligible to be a denizen of the unique world of the Self. Hence It is termed *vāṉam* (Heavens).

poruḷ or wealth: The Self is the True wealth, the richest treasure. The ego-sense has banished one from the Self. It is a self-imposed exile. Becoming the 'other' of the Self and therefore impoverished, one seeks material wealth in order to 'make up' for the loss which provides no bliss but pain. The

treacherous ego sense that stands in the way of enjoying the wealth that is natural and due to us must be slain and this is *poruḷ* or wealth.

śānti or tranquillity: The ego-sense is the root cause of all mental distortions like burning desires. Serene Peace becomes the parting gift bequeathed by the ego on its way out.

vāimai or veracity: The greatest falsehood practised is to consider the non-Self to be the Self or the Ātman. As long as it is not given up the practice of falsehood cannot be considered as having been given up nor can Truthfulness be said to have been embraced.

aruḷ or grace: The death of ego cannot be accomplished but by the Grace of the Lord. The mere annihilation of the ego-sense itself is called Grace.

mouṉam or silence: The sundering of the ego-sense is the means to the state of True Silence that is beyond the realms of speech and mind. Hence the elimination of ego by itself is Silence.

nilai or state of Abidance: The 'Moveless' state of Absolute Stillness of the Self with the mind vanquished is the Natural State. The foundation that supports and bears the mind is the ego-sense. Hence its destruction is termed *nilai*.

cāhamal cāvu or deathless death: When the burden and misery of *saṃsāra* becomes too much to bear, death is welcomed and even courted. At other times, one desires deathlessness – life eternal that transcends death. The way to achieve both simultaneously is to deal a death blow to the ego. It is the notion of the body as Self that leads one to grieve

the death of the body as one's own death. The removal of this misconception bestows immortality. It is termed 'death', for it is the death of the ego-mind.

Birth, in the world, is for dying and dying is to be born again; that birth which grants deathlessness and that death which ensures birthlessness is one and the same and this is spoken of here.

aṟivu or Knowledge: Apart from mind there is no other ignorance. Hence mind is itself ignorance. *Ajñāna* or nescience manifests as *dehātma buddhi*. Abiding without it is knowledge or *jñāna*.

tuṟavu or Renunciation: Renunciation is to sacrifice all possessions and the attachment to all things. As long as the conviction 'I am the body' is not given up, nothing stands renounced. The only renunciation that imparts sense to the term 'renunciation' is the sacrifice of the ego at the Altar of the Self.

vīḍu or Release: That renouncing the ego-sense – the cause of all bondages – is true Release was demonstrated in the earlier part.

iṉbam or Bliss: The very nature of the Self is Bliss. The ego-sense constricts and limits it. Bliss becomes Full and total once the ego-sense is eliminated.

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Exegesis: The four celebrated paths to *jñāna* are not required for a seeker who seeks the truth of the Self through *Ātma Vicāra* – the quest of the Self – is the verity established by Bhagavan in this verse.

14. viṉaiyum vibatti viyōgamañ jñāṉa miṉaiyavaiyārk keṉḏṟāyn diḍalē – viṉaibhatti yōgamuṇar vāyndiḍanā ṉiṉḏṟiyavai yeṉḏṟumiṟā ṉāhamaṉa lēyuṇmai yām.

Verse-split: *viṉaiyum, vibatti, viyōgam, añjñāṉam iṉaiyavai, yārkku, eṉḏṟu āyndiḍalē viṉai, bhakti, yōgam, uṇarvu; āyndiḍa nāṉ iṉḏṟi, avai eṉḏṟum il tāṉāha maṉalē uṇmaiyām.*

Import: Seeking the Self through the quest as to who is he to whom belong *karma* (action), *vibhakti* (alienation from God), *viyogam* (disunion from the Self) and *ajñāna* (ignorance) is itself the four paths to gain *jñāna*, namely, the paths of *karma*, *bhakti*, *yoga* and *jñāna*. The true state of abidance as the Pure Blissful Self is that where, through this enquiry, the seeker 'I' becoming extinct, the aforesaid four like action and the four paths practised to remove them become ever redundant.

Commentary: Assuming as real the separateness of the individual soul and even further, that one suffers from the four defects mentioned above like action and separation, the *jīva* adopts anyone of the four *yogas* and endeavours to neutralize these defects. If only, in truth, he were to start the enquiry as to 'Who is the doer of *karma*?', 'Who is a *bhakta* or a yogi or a seeker of *jñāna*?', the answer will be 'me'. Following it up logically with the query 'Who am I?' will lead one to *Ātma Vicāra*. The culmination of *Ātma Vicāra* is the death of the ego and what survives is the Eternal, Ever-Free, Pure-Self and these four means, then become superfluous. In this sense, it is said *Ātma Vicāra* – in which all paths coalesce into one – is all these *yogas* rolled into one and therefore

Mahāyoga. Assuming wrongly that the *jīva* – the ego – the mere form of *chit jaḍa granti* – as real and further assuming that he, a *saṃsārin* (a worldling), suffers from blemishes like action, etc., he strives through various ways to neutralize them and thus these four paths have come to be adhered to and practised. When this wrong assumption itself is analyzed, enquired into and negated, the paths lose their relevance and their *raison d'être* is lost. Here though the terms *vibhakti* and *viyoga* both have the same import, they have been distinctly interpreted to be in accord with the words *bhakti* and *yoga* to mean 'separation from God' and 'separation from Self'.

Yoga, in general, is taken to refer to the celebrated *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* (the *yoga* with eight limbs) and though the term *yoga* is common to the four ways it has special reference to *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* only.

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Exegesis: It is borne out in the preceding verse that the stratagem of giving up all desires – the main obstacle to Release – is the only way to Deliverance. And the expedient device to achieve that is to abdicate the *dehātma bhāva* – the ego-sense. This being so, to aspire assiduously and court great desires that are not entertained by the ordinary men of the world is the height of folly indeed, declares Bhagavan.

15. cattiyiṉāṟ ṯṟāmiyaṅgun taṉmaiyuṇa rādakila siddhikaṇāñ cērvameṉac cēṭṭikkum – pittarkūt teṉṉai yezhuppiviḍi ṉemmaṭṭit tevvareṉac coṉṉamuḍa vaṉkadaiyiṉ cōḍu.

Verse-split: *cattiyiṉāl tām iyaṅgum taṉmai uṇarādu, 'akila siddhikaḷ nām cērvam' eṉa cēṭṭikkum pittar kūttu, 'eṉṉai ezhuppiviḍiṉ emmaṭṭu it tevvar' eṉa coṉṉa muḍavaṉ kadaiyiṉ cōḍu.*

Import: Unaware of the stark truth that they themselves are activated by the power of God, the antics of mad men who say, "We shall gain all supernatural powers", is akin to the story of the lame man who claimed, "If only I am helped to stand on my feet, then where will these enemies be?"

Commentary: The *jīva* has no freedom of his own. That the power of the Lord residing as Self in the Hearts of all animates the *jīvās* like marionettes and makes them perform actions is the bare truth. Unaware of this truth men strive to accomplish their aims by their own adroitness. This in itself is wrong and sheer ignorance. The *jīva*, the very embodiment of the ego, is not an independent entity and it enjoys no power of its own and all power vests with the Lord. How can the power of the Lord be assumed to be that of the *jīva*?

Nevertheless some profess to obtain *siddhis* or thaumaturgic powers mentioned in verse 35 *cittamāi* in the 'Chapter on Experience' and lead either a strange or extraordinary life or attempt to perform feats that generate awe and wonder in the minds of the onlookers. This is but foolhardiness. The analogy to explain this is the story of a cripple, who requires help from others even to stand up, boasting of his bravery in defeating single-handedly the army of the enemy arrayed in the battlefield. Desire of any kind pampers the ego and makes it prosper. Desires are hurdles that bar the road to Release.

Siddhis are through and through in the plane of *māyā*. That we may not be deluded by them, Bhagavan illustrates how the ordinary life of a man itself is like a great *siddhi*. 'Is it not a wonderful *siddhi* for the *jīva* – the ego – having no form or being of its own, somehow obtaining this strange body and through that living in the world?' queries Bhagavan. Can the *siddhis* sought after by the yogis who have gone astray from the path chosen, be more wonderful than this? There is neither joy nor contentment in the life that the *jīva* sojourns on earth. Nor can the *siddhis* grant either of them. Discretion lies in not being enamoured of them by this foreknowledge and the forewarning provided by Bhagavan.

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Exegesis: That the hankering after the acquisition, possession and manifestation of *siddhis* (thaumaturgic powers) is a drag on spiritual progress and impedes and renders hard the attainment of the Bliss of Release is made explicit in this verse.

16. cittattiṉ śāntiyadē siddamā muttiyeṉiṟ
cittattiṉ seykaiyiṉḏṟic siddiyāc – siddikaḷiṟ
cittañcēr vāreṅgaṉ cittak kalakkantīr
muttisukan tōyvār mozhi.

Verse-split: *cittattiṉ śāntiyadē siddamām mukti eṉil, cittattiṉ seykai iṉḏṟi siddiyā siddikaḷil cittam cērvār eṅgaṉ cittak kalakkam tīr muktisukam tōyvār mozhi?*

Import: The tranquillity of the stilled mind is Deliverance, ready on hand. *Siddhis* are not acquirable

without mental endeavours. How will the non-discriminating ones longing for such *siddhis* achieve the Bliss of Release marked by the ceasing of mental agitations?

Commentary: One who yearns for the acquisition of *siddhis* treads a path that is diametrically opposed to the road to Deliverance is made transparent here. Also the verity that the Eternal Quiescence of the Self is but remaining as the Self with all desires sundered and the seat of those desires, namely, mind becoming extinct is Deliverance stands revealed here. The fact that a *jñāni* or a sage cares a rap for the *siddhis* disclosed in verse 35 of *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu* is worth recalling here. The exhortation made here is that an aspirant for Release and the Experience of the Bliss of Being and Joy of Awareness must eschew the desire to acquire and possess them.

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Exegesis: A seeker abdicating the acceptance of the responsibility even for the care of his body, consigning all the burden of his responsibilities to the Lord saying, "All this burden is Thine" must tread the path of *sādhana* with repose and tranquillity is the content gleaned here. Yet, some with generous disposition and with least concern whatsoever for their own spiritual upliftment and release busy themselves with activities aspiring to reform and uplift the world. In this verse Bhagavan provides a lucid revelation of how foolish and comical are these acts of those ill-conceived *jīvās*.

17. būparan tāṅgaviṟai pōliyuyir tāṅgaladu gōpuran tāṅgiyuruk kōraṇikāṇ – māḇaraṅkoḷ vaṇḍiselu vāṉsumaiyai vaṇḍivai yādutalai koṇḍunali koṇḍadevar kōdu.

Verse-split: *Būparam tāṅga iṟai, pōli uyir tāṅgal adu gōpuram tāṅgi uru kōraṇi kāṇ, mā baram koḷ vaṇḍi seluvāṉ, sumaiyai vaṇḍi vaiyādu, talaikoṇḍu nali koṇḍadu evar kōdu?*

Import: Know that while the Lord (*Īśvara*) is bearing the entire burden of all the beings of the world, the pseudo-self assuming to bear this burden is like the caryatid figure in a tower appearing to sustain the tower, a droll comedy of figurines provoking ridicule. If one, journeying in a carriage that can carry heavy loads, keeps his burden not in the carriage but on his own head and thereby suffers pain, who is to be blamed?

Commentary: A seeker must entrust with full faith all the responsibilities that naturally fall to his lot like the burden of the family and the care of the family including that of his own body to the Lord and be carefree with neither concern nor worry. Otherwise neither *Ātma Vicāra* as described in the first section of this Text nor total and single-pointed devotion towards the Lord will be practicable for him. Not doing so, in addition to bearing the burden of one self and one's own family, assuming to bear the burden of the world also, becomes comical provoking ridicule and derision. Their minds shrouded by delusion, will not venture to indulge in such activities if they were to realize the Truth that the Lord God ordains, sustains and runs the world.

Here special attention must be bestowed to the *jīva* being addressed as *pōliuyir* – the pseudo self. The True Being is the

Supreme Lord, the Self, shining in the Heart. The *jīva*, a mere reflection of That, is not a separate entity; hence the *jīva* has earned the sobriquet 'the *chidābhāsa*'.

However this idea should not be misconstrued as to imply that service to the people of the world should scrupulously be eschewed at all costs. As advocated by Bhagavan in verse 5 of the *Upadeśa Sāram*, "Worshipping with adoration whatever is perceived by the eye in the whole universe and viewing it as the manifestation of the Lord in the eight-fold form is worship of the Lord Himself, and is the best of all worship". Worship of the world as the manifestation of His Form and Glory is conducive to spiritual evolution and does not pamper the ego-sense into flamboyant growth.

It would be ideal here to turn our attention to verse 9 of *Padikam* where Bhagavan sings, "Oh Lord Supreme, I have had enough of carrying this world upon my head, parted from you". The *jīvās*, parted from the Lord, by the utter folly of claiming themselves as separate beings from Him, become worldlings subject to the misery and pain of the *saṃsāric* world. Finding an end to this self-imposed banishment from the Lord must be the aim towards which the mind must be solely concentrated on with all the mental energies concerted. Entertaining care for any other concern in the heart displays want of love and devotion for the Lord.

Bhagavan's answer to a lady who questioned, "What can we do for the benefit of the world?" amply clarifies this point. The reply was, "The one to whom we, unable to release ourselves from *saṃsāra* and to bear the burden, consign our burden, cannot the burden of the world also be consigned?".

Bhagavan explained once the true nature of self-surrender mentioned here. A young man came to Bhagavan

and explained that he had a vision of God in which he was promised that if he surrendered totally He would accomplish mighty missions using him as an instrument and that though he had surrendered himself, God was yet to carry out His promise. Then the sage asked someone to read this Tamil commentary on this Text of his and finally remarked, "If the surrender of your self be real, then everything becomes His responsibility and questioning His doing only means that the self-surrender is not total or real but with reservations and conditions. If the surrender be real, who is there remaining, able to question His action?". This pregnant observation opened his eyes and gaining clarity of thought he went away pacified. Surrender is the recognition of the existence of a Higher, overruling, Power.

Upāsanā Prakaraṇam
Chapter on
Religious worship, Adoration and Meditation

Exegesis: The pursuit of the quest 'Who am I?' – the best of all means to sink into the Heart to win the State of Deliverance – is practicable only by the most matured seekers of ripe competence who are therefore pre-eminently qualified for it. *Paripakwa* or optimum ripeness or ripeness to perfection simply means the sundering of all latencies or *vāsanās* of attachments to objects, gross and subtle, and habits of thought, all of which trigger the mind into activity centering it in and on matters of the world. The spiritual classic *Viveka Cūdāmani* classifies *vāsanās* into three, namely, *vāsanās* or predilections pertaining to the world, pertaining to the body and finally to *Śāstraic* learning, called *Loka vāsanā*, *Deha vāsanā* and *Śāstra vāsanā* respectively. One must, by devotion, become worthy of the Grace of the Supreme for the *vāsanās* to be eliminated. The means to develop such a devotion is *upāsana* or worship.

Devotion, describes Bhagavan (in *Upadeśa Śāram*), is of two types: perception of the Lord with the stance of difference as 'the Other' than oneself is one; and to hold Him as 'the Truth of I' – the stance without distinction – is the other. The latter form of worship alone is described here.

In *ananya bhakti* – the distinctionless perception of viewing Him as I – the Supreme Lord is considered as the Content dwelling in the Heart-Cave. As He resides in the Cave (*Guhai*) of the Heart, He is hailed as *Guhesa* (the Lord of the Cave) and worshipping Him as *Guhesa* is Supreme and true devotion. In order to explain this, Bhagavan indicates the location of the Heart in the two verses that follow.

18. irumulai naḍumār paḍivayi ṟidaṉmē
lirumup poruḷuḷa niṟampala vivaṯṟu
ḷoruporu ḷāmbala rumbeṉa vuḷḷē
yiruviral valattē yiruppadu midayam.

Verse-split: *iru mulai naḍu mārbu aḍi vayiṟu; idaṉmēl iru mupporuḷ uḷa, niṟam pala, ivaṯṟuḷ oru poruḷ āmbal arumbu eṉa uḷḷē iruviral valattē iruppadum idayam.*

19. adaṉmuka migaluḷa dahamuḷa siṟutuḷay
yadaṉilā sādiyo ḍamarnduḷa dirundama
madaṉaiyā sirittuḷa vakilamā nāḍika
ḷaduvaḷi maṉadoḷi yavaṯṟiṉa diruppiḍam.

Verse-split: *adaṉ mukam igal uḷadu; aham uḷa siṟu tuḷay; adaṉil āsādiyoḍu amarndu uḷadu irum damam; adaṉai āsirittu uḷa akila mā nāḍigaḷ; adu, vaḷi maṉadu oḷi avaṯṟiṉadu iruppiḍam.*

Import: Between the two breasts, below the chest and above the abdomen, there are six organs of varied hues. One among them, resembling a lily bud, is the Heart, at two finger-breadths to the right from the centre of the chest. Its mouth is closed. Within the closed Heart is a small orifice, the space of which is the abode of dense darkness, filled with all acquired mental habits like desires, the vital force, mind and the Light of Awareness. It is the nerve-centre of all the principal *nādis* (nerves).

Commentary: The 'Heart' described here is the one on the right side as distinct from the biological heart of flesh on the left side. In order to instruct that this is the Source of all world-appearances, including that of the body, it is spoken

of as the abode of vital air, mind and Awareness. This Light of Awareness is the Principle of the Content Beyond – the Brahman – ever dancing as 'I-I'.

Those who have gained the experience of being the Self are of two kinds: one devoid of the awareness of the body and the other with the awareness of the body. The latter belongs to the tribe of the *jīvanmuktas* – sages realized and alive. If the awareness of the body is obliterated, the body falls; hence for the *jīvanmuktas* the Experience occurs even with the awareness of the body. Since this experience obtains in the Natural State, such an experience is not inimical to worldly activity and body-consciousness. Likewise consciousness of the body and matters pertaining to the empirical world do not, in the least, affect their experience. All this has come to light through the utterances of Bhagavan. It is said that this Experience of the *Sahaja* State is felt on the right side of the chest relating to the place called 'Heart'.

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Exegesis: That the Light of the Heart must be worshipped as the Lord of the Cave of the Heart – *Guhesa* – is the exhortation the ensuing verse proffers.

20. idayamalark guhaiyahamā yilahiṟaiyē
guhēsaṉeṉa vēttap paṭṭō
ṉidamaṉaiya guhēsaṉyā ṉeṉuñ sōham
bhāvaṉaitā ṉiṉṉu ḍambiṯ
ṯṟidamuṟunā ṉeṉundiḍampō labbhiyāsa
balattālat dēvāy niṟkiṟ
sidaiyuḍaṉā ṉeṉumaviddai ceṅkadirō
ṉediriruḷpōṟ sidaiyu maṉḏṟē.

Verse-split: *idaya malar guhai ahamāy ilahu iṟaiyē guhēsaṉ eṉa ēttappaṭṭōṉ; nidam aṉaiya 'guhēsaṉ yāṉ' eṉum sōhambhāvaṉai tāṉ, niṉ uḍambil tidam uṟum nāṉ eṉum diḍampōl abbhiyāsa balattāl at dēvāy niṟkil, sidai 'uḍal nāṉ' eṉum aviddai, ceṅkadirōṉ edir iruḷpōl sidaiyum aṉḏṟē.*

Import: The Supreme Lord who shines within His Abode – the Cave of the Heart Lotus – is extolled as *Guhesa*, "The Lord of the Cave of the Heart". When the *Soham* stance that "this *Guhesa* am I" becomes firm by the strength of practice and replaces the solid strength of the established notion of 'I' in your body now – and if you forever abide as that *Guhesa* – the nescience of "this perishable body am I" will vanish like the darkness before the sun.

Commentary: The ego-sense of 'This body am I', is the prime source of all the *vāsanās*, spearheading the rest in their entirety. The *upāsana* of '*Soham bhāvana*' is administered to douse the potency of all the latent *vāsanās* and habits of thoughts including the *deha vāsanā* or the sense of 'I am the body'. The attenuation of the strength of these *vāsanās* makes one competent to pursue the *Vicāra* or the quest of the Self. The contents of verses 29, 32 and 36 of *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu* can be read together with this verse for a fuller comprehension and facilitation of easier practice.

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Exegesis: Bhagavan further explains that since the body itself is an illusory entity the belief that the Heart is a location

within that is illusory too. The following verses have been culled from *Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*.

21. epperuṅkaṇ ṇāḍiyiṉkaṇ ṇivaiyāvu
nizhalāha vedirē tōṉḏṟu
mippirapañ cattuyirkaṭ kellāmav
vidayameṉa visaippa dēdō
ceppudiyeṉ ḏṟēviṉavu mirāmaṉukku
vasiṭṭamuṉi ceppu kiṉḏṟā
ṉippuviyi ṉuyirkkellā midayamiru
vidamāhu meṇṇuṅ kālē.

Verse-split: *ep perum kaṇṇāḍiyiṉkaṇ ivai yāvum nizhalāha edirē tōṉḏṟum, ippirapañcattu uyirkaṭku ellām av vidayam eṉa isaippadu ēdō? ceppudi eṉḏṟē viṉavum irāmaṉukku vasiṭṭamuṉi ceppukiṉḏṟāṉ: ippuviyiṉ uyirkku ellām idayam iruvidam āhum eṇṇum kālē.*

Import: When Lord Sri Rama beseeched sage Vasishta, "Please deign to explain to me that huge mirror in which this universe appears as an image and that which is called 'The Heart' of all beings manifest in the Universe", the sage responded, "When we reflect, the heart of all beings in the world is two-fold".

श्रीराम उवाचः-

ब्रह्मन् जगति भूतानां हृदयं तत्किमुच्यते ।
इदं सर्वं महादर्शे यस्मिंस्तत्प्रतिबिम्बति ॥

श्री वसिष्ठ उवाचः-

साधो जगति भूतानं हृदयं द्विविधं स्मृतम् ।
उपादेयं च हेयं च विभागोऽयं तयोः श्रुणु ॥

(योग वासिष्ठम्-अ 5-स 78-श्लो-32-33)

śrīrāma uvācaḥ-
brahman jagati bhūtānāṁ hṛdayaṁ tatkimucyate ।
idaṁ sarvaṁ mahādarśe yasmiṁstatpratibimbati ।।
śrī vasiṣṭha uvācaḥ-
sādho jagati bhūtānaṁ hṛdayaṁ dvividhaṁ smṛtam ।
upādeyaṁ ca heyaṁ ca vībhāgo'yaṁ tayoḥ śruṇu ।।

(*Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*, 5-78-32,33)

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Exegesis: This is a sequel to the earlier verse.

22. koḷattakka duntaḷḷat takkadumā
mivviraṇḍiṉ kūṟu kēḷā
yaḷattaṟkā muḍambiṉmār bahattoriḍat
tidayameṉa vamainda vaṅgan
taḷattakka dōraṟivā kāravida
yaṅkoḷḷat takka dāmeṉ
ḏṟuḷattuṭkoḷ ḷaḵduḷḷum puṟamumuḷa
duḷveḷiyi luḷḷa daṉḏṟām.

Verse-split: *koḷḷat takkadum taḷḷat takkadum ām iv viraṇḍiṉ kūṟu kēḷāy: aḷattaṟku ām uḍambiṉ mārbu ahattu or iḍattu idayam eṉa amainda aṅgam taḷḷattakkadu; ōr aṟivu ākāra idayam koḷḷattakkadām eṉḏṟu uḷattuḷ koḷ. aḵdu uḷḷum puṟamum uḷadu. uḷveḷiyil uḷḷadu aṉḏṟām.*

Import: One of them is to be accepted and the other, to be rejected. Listen to the nature of both of them. That organ called 'Heart', situated in a particular place within the chest of this body of six cubit is fit to be rejected. The Heart that is incomparable with nothing higher or equal to it, the very form of Pure Awareness is fit to be

accepted. Know it as such. It is both within and without and without an inside and outside.

इयत्तया परिच्छिन्ने देहे यद्वक्षसोऽन्तरम्।
हेयं तद्धृदयं विद्धि तनावेकतटे स्थितम्॥
संविन्मात्रं तु हृदयमुपादेयं स्थितं स्मृतम्।
तदन्तरे च बाह्ये च न च बाह्ये न चान्तरे॥

(योग वासिष्ठम्-अ 5-स 78-श्लो-34-35)

iyattayā paricchinne dehe yadvakṣaso'ntaram ।
heyaṁ taddhṛdayaṁ viddhi tanāvekataṭe sthitam ।।
saṁvinmātraṁ tu hṛdayamupādeyaṁ sthitaṁ smṛtam ।
tadantare ca bāhye ca n ca bāhye na cāntare ।।

(*Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*, 5-78-34,35)

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Exegesis: This verse pursues further the theme dealt with in the previous verse and dwells on the nature of the Heart to be accepted.

23. aduvēmuk kiyavidaya madaṉkaṇṇiv
vakilamumē yamarndi rukku
maduvāḍi yepporuṭku mellāccel
vaṅgaṭku maduvē yilla
madaṉālē yaṉaittuyirkku maṟivaduvē
yidayameṉa vaṟaiya lāhuñ
sidaiyāniṟ kuṅkaṟpōṟ jaḍavuḍali
ṉavayavattōr siṟukū ṟaṉḍṟāl.

Verse-split: *aduvē mukkiya idayam. adaṉkaṇ iv akilamumē amarndu irukkum; adu āḍi ep poruṭkum; ellā chelvaṅ gaṭkum aduvē illam; adaṉālē, aṉaittu uyirkkum*

aṟivu aduvē idayam eṉa aṟaiyal āhum; sidaiyāniṟkum kalpōl jaḍa uḍaliṉ avayavattu ōr siṟu kūṟu aṉdṟāl.

Import: That (form of Awareness) indeed is the Heart in essence. All beings abide in it as existence. It is the mirror in which all these worlds are contained. It is the store-house of all wealth. Hence (The One) Awareness can be termed as the 'Heart' of all beings. It is not an organ of the perishable body which is insentient like a stone.

तत्तु प्रधानं हृदयं तत्रेदं समवस्थितम् ।
तदादर्शः पदार्थानां तत्कोशः सर्वसंपदाम् ॥
सर्वेषामेव जन्तूनां संवित् हृदयमुच्यते ।
न देहावयवैकांशो जडजीर्णोपलोपमः ॥

(योग वासिष्ठम्-अ 5-स 78-श्लो-36-37)

tattu pradhānaṁ hṛdayaṁ tatredaṁ samavasthitam ।
tadādarśaḥ padārthānāṁ tatkośaḥ sarvasampadām ॥
sarveṣāmeva jantūnāṁ saṁvit hṛdayamucyate ।
na dehāvayavaikāṁśo jaḍajīrṇopalopamaḥ ॥

(*Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*, 5-78-36,37)

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Exegesis: That, on reaching the Heart, the residual impressions of the mind or the *vāsanās* get dissipated, forms the content of this verse.

24. ādaliṉā laṟivumaya māñsudda
vidayattē yahattaic cerkkuñ
sādaṉaiyāl vādaṉaika ḷoḍuvāyu
voḍukkamumē cārun tāṉē.

Verse-split: *ādaliṉāl aṟivumayam ām sudda idayattē ahattai cerkkum sādaṉaiyāl vādaṉaikaḷoḍu vāyu oḍukkamumē cārum tāṉē.*

Import: Therefore by the practice or *sādhana* of merging the mind in the Pure Heart that is All-Awareness, the dissipation of residual impressions of desires and attachments and the subsidence of breath will be accomplished automatically.

तस्मात्संविन्मये शुद्धे हृदये हृतवासनः ।
बलन्नियोजिते चित्ते प्राणस्पन्दो निरुध्यते ॥

(योग वासिष्ठम्-अ 5-स 78-श्लो-38)

tasmātsaṁvinmaye śuddhe hṛdaye hṛtavāsanaḥ ।
balanniyojite citte prāṇaspando nirudhyate ॥

(*Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*, 5-78-38)

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Exegesis: This verse also reiterates the same verity.

25. akila vupādi yahaṉḏṟa vaṟivē
dahamac civameṉ ṟaṉisa – mahattē
yahalāt diyāṉa madaṉā lahatti
ṉakilavā satti yahaṯṟu.

Verse-split: *akila upādi ahaṉḏṟa aṟivu ēdu? 'aham ac civam' eṉḏṟu anisam ahattē ahalāt diyāṉam adaṉāl ahattiṉ akila āsatti ahaṯṟu.*

Import: By the ceaseless contemplation in the Heart of "that Awareness, freed of all conditioning adjuncts or *upādhis* – That Śivam am I" – cast off all attachments from the mind.

Commentary: The Self, the form of Pure Awareness, is the Heart. There is nothing as Heart other than this.

What is conveyed here is that the Heart is just the fountain-head of all the ramifications of the ego. It is not in the body which is simply an expanded manifestation of the ego. If mind, through *vicāra*, seeks its Source, the Heart, the perpetual oscillations of both mind and breath cease. Then the Pure Self survives sole and whole is the explicit import. That Self, transcending both time and space, has no location as an abode or dwelling place. It is called the Heart in the sense it is the Source of All.

सर्वोपाधिविनिर्मुक्तं चिद्रूपं यन्निरन्तरम् ।
तच्छिवोऽहमिति ध्यात्वा सर्वासक्तिं विवर्जयेत् ॥
(श्रीदेविकालोत्तरम् - श्लो 47)

sarvopādhivinirmuktaṁ cidrūpaṁ yannirantaram ।
tacchivo'hamiti dhyātvā sarvāsaktiṁ vivarjayet ॥
(Śrī Devikālottaram - ślo 47)

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Exegesis: How then should a seeker sojourn in the empirical world until the dawn of the experience of *jñāna* in the Ego-less State is the query. The ensuing verse is by way of an answer.

The following two verses have also been culled from *Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*.

26. vidavidamā nilaikaḷelām vicārañ ceidu
miccaiyaṟu paramapadam yādoṉ ḏṟuṇḍō
vadaṉaiyē diḍamāha vahattāṟ paṯṟi
yaṉavarada mulahilviḷai yāḍu vīrā
vedusakala vidamāṉa tōṯṟaṅ gaṭku
medārttamadā yahattuḷadō vadaiya ṟindā
yadaṉālap pārvaiyiṉai yahalā deṉḏṟu
māsaipō lulahilviḷai yāḍu vīrā.

Verse-split: *vidam vidam ām nilaikaḷ elām vicāram ceidu miccai aṟu paramapadam yādu oṉḏṟu uṇḍō adaṉaiyē diḍamāha ahattāl paṯṟi aṉavaradam ulahil viḷaiyāḍu vīrā; edu sakalavidamāṉa tōṯṟaṅgaṭkum edārttamadāy ahattu uḷadō adai aṟindāy. adaṉāl ap pārvaiyiṉai ahalādu eṉḏṟum āsaipōl ulahil viḷaiyāḍu vīrā.*

Import: After having investigated into the truth of all the states of varying nature, holding on firmly in the heart that Supreme State of Reality that remains, perform your part in the world (regarding the affairs of the world a mere play). You have realized that which is within as the ground truth of the plurality of all these appearances. Hence, without ever forgetting that perception, play your part in the world as if you are attached to the world.

प्रविचार्य दशाः सर्वा यदतुच्छं परं पदम्।
तदेव भावनालम्ब्य लोके विहर राघव॥
ज्ञातवानसि सर्वेषां भावानां सम्यगन्तरम्।
यथेच्छसि तथा दृष्ठ्या लोके विहर राघव॥

(योग वासिष्ठम्-अ 5-स 18-श्लो-20-23)

pravicārya daśāḥ sarvā yadatucchaṁ paraṁ padam ।
tadeva bhāvanālambya loke vihara rāghava ।।
jñātavānasi sarveṣāṁ bhāvānāṁ samyagantaram ।
yathecchasi tathā dṛṣṭhyā loke vihara rāghava ।।

(*Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*, 5-18-20,23)

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Exegesis: This again is yet another verse in which the same idea is further elaborated.

27. pōlimaṉa vezhuccimagizh vuṯṟō ṉāhip
pōlimaṉap padaippuveṟup puṯṟō ṉāhip
pōlimuyal vāntoḍakka muṯṟō ṉāhip
puraiyilaṉā yulahilviḷai yāḍu vīrā
māleṉumpal kaṭṭuviḍu paṭṭō ṉāhi
maṉṉusama ṉāhiyellā nilaimaik kaṇṇum
vēlaikaḷvē ḍattiyaiva veḷiyiṟ ceidu
vēṇḍiyavā ṟulahilviḷai yāḍu vīrā.

Verse-split: *pōli maṉavezhucci magizhvu uṯṟōṉ āhi, pōli maṉappadaippu veṟuppu uṯṟōṉ āhi, pōlimuyalvu ām toḍakkam uṯṟōṉ āhi, purai ilaṉāy ulahil viḷaiyāḍu vīrā. māl eṉum pal kaṭṭu viḍupaṭṭōṉ āhi, maṉṉu samaṉāhi ellā nilaimaikkaṇṇum vēlaikaḷ vēḍattu iyaiva veḷiyil seidu, vēṇḍiyavāṟu ulahil viḷaiyāḍu vīrā.*

Import: Feigning a facade of excitement and delight, with seeming anxiety and aversion, with seeming initiative and endeavour, yet without any attachment to them, play on in the world. Released from the bonds of attachment of various kinds, with equanimity of mind firmly established in all states, performing actions in the

world in all situations according to the role you have assumed, play on as you please in the world.

कृत्रिमोल्लास हर्षस्थः कृत्रिमोद्वेगगर्हणः ।
कृत्रिमारंभसंरम्भो लोके विहर राघव ॥
आशापाशशतोन्मुक्तः समः सर्वासु वृत्तिषु ।
बहिः प्रकृतिकार्यस्थो लोके विहर राघव ॥

(योग वासिष्ठम्-अ 5-स 18-श्लो-24-26)

kṛtrimollāsa harṣasthaḥ kṛtrimodvegagarhaṇaḥ ।
kṛtrimārambhasaṁrambho loke vihara rāghava ॥
āśāpāśaśatonmuktaḥ samaḥ sarvāsu vṛttiṣu ।
bahiḥ prakṛtikāryastho loke vihara rāghava ॥

(*Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*, 5-18-24;26)

Jīvanmukta Prakaraṇam
Chapter on those Liberated while Alive

Exegesis: A *jīvanmukta* is one who, ever abiding in the State of Knowledge called 'Liberation', is perceived in a body. That the glory and grandeur of such a one is beyond the pale of thought and defies speech, has already been made clear in the chapter on Experience. That the seekers may comprehend that state to some extent, Bhagavan speaks of his mighty glory and brings to the fore the difference between him and the worldling (the *saṃsārin*).

28. aṟivuṇmai niṭṭaṉā māṉmavit tāvā
ṉaṟivāṟ pulaṉceṯṟā ṉārtā – ṉaṟivaṅgi
yāvaṉaṟi vāṅkulisat tāṉkāla kālaṉavaṉ
cāviṉaimāy vīraṉeṉac cāṯṟu.

Verse-split: *aṟivu uṇmai niṭṭaṉ ām āṉmavittu āvāṉ, aṟivāl pulaṉ ceṯṟāṉ ārtāṉ, aṟivu aṅgi āvaṉ, aṟivām kulisattāṉ; kālakālaṉ avaṉ; cāviṉai māy vīraṉ eṉa cāṯṟu.*

Import: He, who by the Knowledge of the Ātman, is established in Truth, and who by that Knowledge has extinguished the impressions of the five senses, is the Fire of Awareness, and the wielder of the thunderbolt of Self-Awareness. He is the conqueror of time and he is verily *kālakālā*, the conqueror of *Yama* (the God of Death) and do proclaim that he is the valiant hero who has slain death.

Commentary: Knowledge, it was pointed out in the Chapter on Discrimination, is abiding indeed in the Natural State. However highly sung is the glory and the exaltedness of a *jñāni* who has attained the Natural State, it can never be a hyperbole. He is even greater than the God of Fire and superior to *Indra*, the wielder of thunderbolt. Absolute Knowledge or *jñāna* is supreme power, and is mightier than the powers of the God of Fire and of even *Indra*, the suzerain Lord of the celestials. A realized sage has transcended Time and *kālaṉ* (*yama*), the Lord of Death, too. He is comparable only to *Īśvara*, the Lord, implying he is one who has transcended the difference between *jīva* and the Lord.

विषयप्रतिसंहारं यः करोति विवेकतः
मृत्योर्मृत्युरितिख्यातः सविद्वानात्मवित्कविः ।
ज्ञानसद्भावसंस्थानः ज्ञानाग्निः ज्ञानवज्रभृत्
मृत्युहन्तेतिविख्यातः महावीरो विमत्सरः ॥

viṣayapratisaṁhāraṁ yaḥ karoti vivekataḥ
mṛtyormṛtyuritikhyātaḥ savidvānātmavitkaviḥ ।
jñānasadbhāvasaṁsthānaḥ jñānāgniḥ jñānavajrabhṛt
mṛtyuhantetivikhyātaḥ mahāvīro vimatsaraḥ ॥

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Exegesis: The notion that the vision of the (*tattva*) Principle or the Experience of being the Self is tantamount to self-destruction and that it is a void is misconceived. A seer of Truth shines in all splendour with many excellences like sharpness of intellect, etc. than ever before, due to his Fullness of Knowledge and Power. Bhagavan highlights this truth from excerpts from *Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*.

29. tattuvaṅ kaṇḍavaṟkut tāmē vaḷarumoḷi
buddivalu vumvasantham pōndadumē – yittaraiyiṟ
ṯṟāruvazha gādi sakala guṇaṅkaḷuñ
cēra viḷaṅgaleṉat tēr.

Verse-split: *tattuvam kaṇḍavaṟku tāmē vaḷarum oḷi buddi valuvum; vasantham pōndadumē ittaraiyil tāru azhagādi sakala guṇaṅkaḷum cēra viḷaṅgal eṉa tēr.*

Import: Instantaneously with the onset of spring, the trees bloom with fresh beauty and other special qualities. In the same way for a Seer of Truth will intelligence, powers, resplendence and all other rich endowments of various kinds of wealth shine in unison, of their own accord, without any endeavour on his part.

Commentary: It is a matter of direct perception by all that a Seer of Truth who appeared just an ordinary human-being like any other before Enlightenment, shining with the resplendence of the Light of the Self after the Experience attracts and claims as his own countless disciples.

बलं बुद्धिश्च तेजश्च दृष्टतत्त्वस्य वर्धते ।
सवसन्तस्य वृक्षस्य सौन्दर्याद्या गुणा इव ॥
(योग वासिष्ठम्-अ 5-स 76-श्लो-20)

balaṁ buddhiśca tejaśca dṛṣṭatattvasya vardhate ।
savasantasya vṛkṣasya saundaryādyā guṇā iva ॥
(*Yoga Vāsiṣṭham,* 5-76-20)

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Exegesis: For a *jñāni* of this genre, bondage caused by karma gets snapped was clarified in the chapter on

Experience. The doubt whether his continued embodiment in the world and behaviour like any other man will result in his being caught in fresh karmic bonds is dispelled in the ensuing verse.

30. cēimaiyuḷañ ceṉḏṟukadai kēṭpārpōl vādaṉaiha ṭēymaṉañcey duñceyyā dēyavaiha – ṭōymaṉañcey diṉḏṟēṉuñ ceydadē yiṅgasaivaṯ ṟuṅkaṉaviṟ kuṉḏṟēṟi vīzhvār kuzhi.

Verse-split: *sēymai uḷam ceṉḏṟu kadai kēṭpārpōl, vādaṉaihaḷ tēy maṉam ceydum ceyyādē; avaihaḷ tōy maṉam ceydu iṉḏṟēṉum ceydadē; iṅgu asaivu aṯṟum, kaṉavil kuṉḏṟu ēṟi vīzhvār kuzhi.*

Import: Like men listening to tales with their minds having wandered far away, a mind, the impressions of which have been totally destroyed, is inactive even while it seems to act. But a mind soaked in *vāsanās* is active even while doing nothing, like one, who though he lies motionless in bed here, climbs a cliff and tumbles down into a pit in a dream.

Commentary: The import of this verse is that the cause for the bondage of karma is not simply the body but the *vāsanās* or the residual impressions that the mind is impregnated with. Even if the body is engaged in activity, if the mind be still, there is no question of any cause culminating in bondage born of action. For a *jñāni* who abides in Truth bereft of *vāsanās* with an ego that is extinct, there can be no bondage of action. Bondage, inherent in the ego-sense, will not survive if the ego itself ceases to exist. People of the world term his mind as the 'most pure' but, in truth, he has

no mind at all whatsoever. That, having been dissolved in Brahman, has become resolved as the very form of Brahman, indeed.

अकर्तृ कुर्वदप्येतच्छेतः प्रतनुवासनम्
दूरंगतमनाजन्तुः कथा संश्रवणे यथा ।
अकुर्वदपि कर्त्रेव चेतः प्रघनवासनम्
निष्पन्दाङ्गमपि स्वप्ने श्वभ्रपातस्थिताविव ॥

(योग वासिष्ठम्-अ 5-स 56-श्लो-13-14)

akartṛ kurvadapyetacchetaḥ pratanuvāsanam
dūraṅgatamanājantuḥ kathā saṁśravaṇe yathā ।
akurvadapi kartreva cetaḥ praghanavāsanam
niṣpandāṅgamapi svapne śvabhrapātasthitāviva ॥

(*Yoga Vāsiṣṭham*, 5-56-13;14)

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Exegesis: The truth of the principle that the affairs of the empirical world, infact, are non-existent for a *jīvanmukta* and that they seem to exist is just an appearance, is what constitutes the theme of the verse that follows.

31. vaṇḍituyil vāṉukkav vaṇḍicela ṉiṯṟaloḍu vaṇḍitaṉi yuṯṟiḍutaṉ māṉumē – vaṇḍiyā mūṉavuḍa luḷḷē yuṟaṅgumeyñ jñāṉikku māṉatozhi ṉiṭṭaiyuṟak kam.

Verse-split: *vaṇḍi tuyilvāṉukku av vaṇḍi celal niṯṟaloḍu vaṇḍi taṉi uṯṟiḍutal māṉumē: vaṇḍiyām ūṉa uḍal uḷḷē uṟaṅgum meyñjñāṉikkum āṉa tozhil, niṭṭai, uṟakkam.*

Import: Just as the three states, of the cart on the move, its standing still and its being left with horses unyoked are all alike for one who sleeps in the cart, so too, to the sage who is in the sleep of Self-Awareness in this despicable body, the activity of the body, (rather its inactivity), samādhi and sleep are all alike.

Commentary: The body, in this verse, is compared to a cart. The instruments of perception like eyes are comparable to the horses yoked to the cart. The three states normally experienced by an ordinary yogi are the state of being engaged in external activity, the state of samādhi or *nishṭai* (where in the instruments of perception and inner organs are restrained from functioning) and sleep (where the senses are detached). These are akin to the three states of one remaining in a cart. The motion of the cart with the horses yoked to it is likened to the exteriorized state where the yogi engages himself in physical activity. The samādhi of the yogi is comparable to the halting of the cart with the horses yoked still; while his sleep is like that of the cart standing still with horses unyoked.

But the state of sages liberated while alive – *jīvanmuktās* – like Bhagavan, unlike these, is unique. It is similar to the state of one who sleeps (to the world) in the cart (body) to whom the three states – of the cart moving, halting of the cart with horses yoked and the cart standing still with the horses unyoked – are all the same. In the same way, for a sage who has realized the Truth, and is ever awake in Pure Awareness, physical activity, samādhi and sleep are just one and the same. The sage steeped in Truth is ever freed of the false identity of the body as I, and the changes of the triad of the states do not belong to him, is the underlying meaning. It can be inferred from this that his state is one of perennial samādhi which

continues unabated and unhindered by physical activity; nor are the actions hindered by his samādhi. Therefore, it is wrong to misconstrue that there are two states like one of being in samādhi and another an exteriorized one for a *jñāni*. He is ever anchored in the State of samādhi.

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Exegesis: Since a sage is one who 'sleeps' within the body, he has no part whatsoever in the traffic of the world transactions is all that is implied by the foregoing verse. The ensuing verse cautions us against the erroneous conclusion that the state of a realized sage is always one of 'sleep'. His state *sui-generis*, described as 'waking sleep' or 'conscious sleep', is one of Pure-Awareness called Eternal Wakefulness that transcends the three states commonly known and experienced by ordinary men and truly lies beyond. Bhagavan declares this as the 'Transcendental State'.

32. naṉavu kaṉavutuyi ṉāṛuvārk kappā
ṉaṉavu tuyiṯṟuriya nāmat – teṉumat
turiya matēyuḷadāṯ ṟōṉḏṟumūṉ ḏṟiṉḏṟāṯ
ṟuriya vatītan tuṇi.

Verse-split: *naṉavu kaṉavu tuyil nāṛuvārkku appāl naṉavu tuyil turiya nāmattu eṉum at turiyamadē uḷadāl, tōṉḏṟum mūṉḏṟu iṉḏṟāl, turiya atītam tuṇi.*

Import: There is a state called *Turīya* (the Fourth state), one of conscious sleep or wakeful sleep, beyond the vicious circle of the three states, namely, sleep, dream and wakefulness experienced by *jīvās* or men of the world. Since that Fourth State alone is real, the other

three like waking state become mere false appearances. Know that the state of *Turīya* is hailed as *Turīyātīta* (the Transcendental State) of Pure Awareness.

Commentary: The State of *jñāna* is the very form of Pure and Full Awareness. It is, indeed, wakefulness. Since that state is marked by the absence of the rising of the ego and the universe – the creation of the ego – (the whole of which is contained in these three states), it has also the semblance of sleep. Hence it is often referred to as wakeful sleep (*jāgrat suṣupti*) or *naṉavu tuyil* or conscious sleep. The idea revealed is that a *jīvanmukta* is one who, while wide awake, sinks into the Heart and attains realization of the Self there. That alone, indeed, is the True state for here the Light of the Truth of the Self shines in all Its resplendence, unclouded and unblurred, as the Pure 'I am'. Since the three states of waking, dream and sleep that are commonly experienced by the *saṃsārins*, the men of the world, are regarded as 'real' by them, as a measure of concession to the worldlings, it is called the '*Turīyam* – the Fourth State'. But the first three states described here are sustained by the false *dehātma bhāva* – an 'I' that sleeps, dreams and wakes up, on the basis of which the three states operate – and, therefore, stand proved unreal and false with the extinction of ego, their basis. It is incongruous to term the Natural and the only Real State as *Turīya* or the Fourth State since the other three stand negated. What, then, is It? In all propriety, It should be termed as *atītam* – the State Beyond – the Pure Verity well beyond the pale of *Māyā*. Hence, It is also termed as '*Turīyātītam* (Beyond the Fourth)'. Texts often speak of *Turīya* and *Turīyātīta* as if they are two distinct states. That they are not two but one is the Experienced Truth, is made transparent in this verse.

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Exegesis: The truth that for a Sage who is released while alive, all the three types of karma including that of *prārabdha* – the currently experienced karma responsible for the present embodiment – will be at an end is enunciated emphatically in the ensuing verse with an apt illustration.

33. sañcitavā kāmiyaṅgaḷ cārāvā jñāṉikkūzh viñjumeṉal vēṯṟārkēḷ vikkuviḷam – buñcollām bharttāpōyk kaimmaiyuṟāp pattiṉiyeñ jādadupōṟ karttāpō müviṉaiyuṅ kāṇ.

Verse-split: *sañcita ākāmiyaṅgaḷ, cārāvām jñāṉikku; ūzh viñjum eṉal vēṯṟār kēḷvikku viḷambum collām; bharttā pōy kaimmai uṟā pattiṉi eñjādadupōl, karttāpōm müviṉaiyum kāṇ.*

Import: The statements of *Śāstraic* Texts that a realized sage is freed of the two types of *karma*, namely *Sanchita* (the stored up actions or the enormous one in reserve) and *Āgami* (future actions) but *Prārabdha* (the current *karmas* that have begun to yield fruit) will remain is but in reply to the query of the *ajñānis* and not the Real Truth. Just as none of the many wives wedded to the same man can escape widowhood after the demise of their husband, so also, not one of the three types of karma that depended on the sole doer, the ego, will survive after the expiry of ego in the state of *jñāna*.

Nūlaṟivu Prakaraṇam
Chapter on
Textual Knowledge without Experience

Exegesis: The difference between the worldlings and the liberated sages is monumental and beyond measure. People who possess scholarship and erudition also belong to the common run of the *saṃsārins*. Mere Textual knowledge cannot confer sagehood on one. Is not the Experience of being the real Self that is the True Knowledge, acquired only when the ego departs dead? Knowledge garnered from Textbooks, unlike that of direct Experience of the Self, is not capable of dealing a death blow to the ego; on the contrary, its nature is to spur it on to flamboyant growth. This Chapter elaborates this Truth.

The first verse under this Chapter elucidates how men of intellectual and pedantic knowledge are greater *saṃsārins* than the less learned or even the unlettered others.

34. makkaṇ maṉaivimudaṉ maṯṟavarka ḷaṟpamati makkaṭ korukuḍumba māṉavē – mikkakalvi yuḷḷavarta muḷḷattē yoṉḏṟalapaṉ ṉūṟkuḍumba muḷḷaduyō gattaḍaiyā yōr.

Verse-split: *makkaḷ maṉaivi mudal maṯṟavarkaḷ aṟpamati makkaṭku oru kuḍumbam māṉavē, mikka kalvi uḷḷavar tam uḷḷattē oṉḏṟu alla pala nūl kuḍumbam uḷḷadu yōgat taḍaiyā yōr.*

Import: Know that for the meagre witted men of the world, wife, children and others constitute just a single small family but for men of vast learning there is not one

but many families of books within their hearts which are great hindrances to yoga.

Commentary: Thoughts alone, the progeny of the ego, invading and occupying the mind constitute the *saṃsāra*. For the men of the world, in general, such thoughts are relatively less, centering on the single and small world of wife, children, relatives and others. But in the hearts of men of vast learning, with knowledge amassed from various Texts and Treatises, each Text that they have read comprising various matters constitutes and exists as a family. Such innumerable numbers of families pose insurmountable barriers barring the doors to *Vicāra Yoga* of 'Who am I?'. Even if the knowledge pertains to the content of *Vedāntic* Texts or Scriptural or *Śāstraic* Lore, it too is still an obstacle, all the same.

पुत्रदारादिसंसारा तद्भवन्त्यल्पचेतसाम् ।
विदुषां शास्त्रसंसारो योगाभ्यासस्य विघ्नकृत् ॥

putradārādisaṁsārā tadbhavantyalpacetasām ।
viduṣāṁ śāstrasaṁsāro yogābhyāsasya vighnakṛt ॥

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Exegesis: If a *pandit* or a man of letters desires release from the misery of *saṃsāra*, he must pursue *Vicāra* by propelling his concerted mental energies towards it (*Vicāra*) failing which his erudition and scholarship becomes wasteful and barren. The following verse dilates upon this truth.

35. ezhuttaṟinda tāmpiṟanda deṅgēyeṉ ḏṟeṇṇi yezhuttait tolaikka veṇādō – rezhuttaṟindeṉ cattaṅko ḷendirattiṉ śālbuṯṟār śōṇagiri vittakaṉē vēṟār viḷambu.

Verse-split: *ezhuttu aṟinda tām piṟandadu eṅgē eṉḏṟu eṇṇi ezhuttai tolaikka eṇādōr, ezhuttu aṟindu eṉ? cattamkoḷ endirattiṉ śālbu uṯṟār, śōṇagirivittakaṉē! vēṟu ār? viḷambu.*

Import: If those who pride themselves on their acquisition of knowledge of letters (Texts and books) fail to seek (and sink in the Heart) by the enquiry whence they were born and thereby wipe out their writ of fate, of what avail is such knowledge? Who else are there in the world, like these men, Oh! Lord of *Śoṇagiri* (Arunachala), who are just akin to a mechanical contraption (tape recorders) that just absorbs and merely plays out sounds?

Commentary: The writ of fate can be erased by seeking the Heart, the place of the origin of 'I', even as it (the ego) rises as "I am a man of vast knowledge of books." So long as the mind of a man, whose erudition sits heavily on his brows does not turn inward towards its source, he can claim equality only with a 'tape recorder', a mechanical contrivance that is available aplenty and cheap these days. Though such knowledge of great many books may be of use to others perhaps, that it is a barren and fruitless acquisition serving no purpose for the learned one himself, is certain.

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Exegesis: Such a scholar of extensive erudition stands to gain good if only had he remained like others who have not acquired the knowledge, so does the succeeding verse expound.

36. kaṯṟu maḍaṅgāriṯ kallādā rēyuyndār paṯṟu madappēyiṉ pāluyndār – cuṯṟupala cindaivāy nōyuyndār cīrtēḍi yōḍaluyndā ruyndadoṉ ḏṟaṉṟeṉ ḏṟuṇar.

Verse-split: *kaṯṟum aḍaṅkāril kallādārē uyndār; paṯṟum mada pēyiṉpāl uyndār; cuṯṟu pala cindai, vāy nōy uyndār; cīr tēḍi ōḍal uyndār; uyndadu oṉḏṟu aṉḏṟu eṉḏṟu uṇar.*

Import: The unlettered are easier saved than the learned *pandit* whose ego has not subsided by the quest of the Self. The unlettered are saved from the clutches of the "possessing demon", pride; they are free from the malady of the maelstrom of thoughts and words; saved from wandering all over the land seeking fame and fortune. Thus know that the ills the unlettered are saved from are just not one but many.

Commentary: That which draws our attention, one must note here, is that the pride of men of vainglorious scholarship is more insidious than that of others, for egoism swells by the pride of knowledge and the heart is burdened with numerous new attachments. In ways more than one an unlettered one is more blessed than a scholar whose erudition has not culminated in quiescence, peace and tranquillity consequent on the extinction of the ego. The truth that has been emphasized time and again in this Text and reiterated here is that a learned scholar, who has not by experience known the truth of his Self, is still an ignoramus even if his scholarship be unbounded and extensive.

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Exegesis: The ensuing two verses bespeak the principle that even such a scholar of scriptural lore, who aspires to sever the bondage by seeking Release cannot stand comparison with the *jīvanmukta.*

37. ellā vulahun turumbā yiṉumaṟaiha
ḷellāmē kaikku ḷirundālum – pollāp
pukazhcciyām vēsivasam pukkā raḍimai
yahalaviḍa lammā varidu.

Verse-split: *ellā ulahum turumbāyiṉum, maṟaihaḷ ellāmē kaikkuḷ irundālum, pollā pukazhcciyām vēsi vasam pukkār, aḍimai ahalaviḍal ammā! aridu.*

Import: Even if all the worlds are regarded as mere trash and the subtle content of the entire sacred lore is well learnt and assimilated if one falls a prey to the harlot of flattery, hard indeed is it to cast off that servitude. This stands as a great wonder, indeed.

Commentary: Even those illustrious men, who firmly and unswervingly pursue the paths of meditation and yoga, after mastering various *Vedāntic* Texts, comprehending well their implicit and subtle imports, thereby developing devotion to Liberation that consumes the ego by renouncing all enjoyments of the worlds here and hereafter, fall a prey to, hooked by the comfort of flattery and get unsettled from their state of equanimity at least to a slight extent. This is so because their ego has not been subjected to total elimination.

This, it is believed, was observed in the life of Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra before he attained sagehood who, for a longtime lived in the forests practising *sādhana.* When a fellow pupil of earlier days met him and paid encomiums

on his achievements he evinced elation and happiness. On seeing this the other questioned Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra how come such an exalted and saintly a person as even he could be so moved by praise. Then the sage replied in a verse in Sanskrit that couched the content of this verse.

तृणतुलिताखिलजगतां करकलिताखिल निगम रहस्यानाम् ।
श्लाघावारवधूटी घटदासत्वं सुदुर्निरसम् ॥

tṛṇatulitākhilajagatāṁ karakalitākhila nigama rahasyānām |
ślāghāvāravadhūṭī ghaṭadāsatvaṁ sudurnirasam ||

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Exegesis: A *jīvanmukta*, ever the personification of the exalted form of the 'moveless' Brahman is the only one whose equanimity remains unperturbed either by praise or censure.

38. tāṉaṉḏṟi yāruṇḍu taṉṉaiyā reṉcoliṉeṉ
tṟāṉtṟaṉṉai vāzhttukiṉun tāzhttukiṉun – tāṉeṉṉa
tāṉpiṟareṉ ḏṟōrāmaṯ ṟaṉṉilaiyiṟ pērāmaṯ
ṟāṉeṉḏṟu niṉḏṟiḍavē tāṉ.

Verse-split: *tāṉ aṉḏṟi yār uṇḍu? taṉṉai yār eṉ coliṉ eṉ? tāṉ taṉṉai vāzhttugiṉum tāzhttugiṉum tāṉ eṉṉa? tāṉ piṟar eṉḏṟu ōrāmal, taṉ nilaiyil pērāmal, tāṉ eṉḏṟum niṉḏṟiḍavē tāṉ.*

Import: Without thinking 'I am one, and he is another', never swerving or slipping from one's Real (Natural) state, if one abides firmly ever in the Self,

who is there other than the Self? What does it matter if anyone says anything about oneself? What does it matter if one were to praise or denounce oneself?

Commentary: For one who abides ever-anchored in the Self and knows no distinctions between himself and others and for whom there is none other than the Self, the praise and censure by others is like his praising himself or his disparaging himself. He is indifferent to both and totally unaffected by either. From this we come to know that the State of the Non-dual Being is most imposingly majestic with no room for any mental deviation and distortion.

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Exegesis: After knowing the Truth of Non-duality from the *upadeśa* of a worthy preceptor one must endeavour to adhere to it in the practice of *dhyāna* with the goal of realizing the *Advaitic* Truth in the Heart. Instead, attempting to act in the empirical world from the *Adavitic* stand point is fraught with danger and will land one in peril.

Bhagavan, through this verse, administers a caution and a warning against this danger amongst others.

39. adduvida meṉḏṟu mahattuṟuha vōrpōdu
madduvidañ seykaiyi lāṯṯraṟka – puttiraṉē
yadduvida mūvulahat tāhuṅ guruviṉō
ḍadduvida māhā daṟi.

Verse-split: *adduvidam eṉḏṟum ahattu uṟuha: ōr pōdum adduvidam seykaiyil āṯṯraṟka; puttiraṉē! adduvidam mūvulahattu āhum; guruviṉōḍu adduvidam āhādu aṟi.*

Import: Be ever aware in your Heart of the Truth of Non-duality. Never apply the teaching of non-duality in the transactions of the world. Oh, my son! Even if you were to apply the practice of non-duality in respect of all the three worlds, never ever apply it to the Guru (the very form of Transcendence).

Commentary: We have often heard Bhagavan state that regarding the non-self like the body, the mind and the *chidābhāsa jīva* as the Self and conducting oneself accordingly, is what nescience and duality is all about. Conversely not regarding and behaving so is Non-duality and Knowledge. It is clear from this that unless and until the sense of Self in the body is liquidated the experience of non-duality remains but a mere pipe-dream. While ignorance (the *dehātma buddhi*) is alive, duality persists. A mere theoretical knowledge of *Advaita* does not destroy the ego and therefore actions in the empirical world must need be executed with due deference to the nature of *dvaita* and in conformity with its dictates. Actions, truly *advaitic*, are impossible in practice and even if attempted, the ego (which has not become extinct) will only be in command of the actions, and waxing in its strength, will also lead to defalcations and blemishes culminating in a further flourish of the dualistic impressions in the mind. We find that even a sage, ever anchored in the experience of Non-duality, never trespasses the deference due to the dualities in the affairs of the empirical world. Therefore, the conclusive opinion of Bhagavan is that while non-duality is a matter of experience for the *jñānis*, it is an efficacious tool for purposes of meditation for the *ajñānis*.

As long as an aspirant considers himself as a seeker or looks upon himself as a *jīva* due to the predominantly prevalent ego-sense, to entertain an attitude of non-difference with the Guru is highly improper regressive and even definitely injurious is the injunction proffered here.

भावाद्वैतं सदा कुर्यात्क्रियाद्वैतं न कर्हिचित्।
अद्वैतं त्रिषु लोकेषु नाद्वैतं गुरुणा सह॥

(श्री शङ्कराचार्यः तत्त्वोपदेशः - श्लो 87)

bhāvādvaitaṁ sadā kuryātkriyādvaitaṁ na karhicit |
advaitaṁ triṣu lokeṣu nādvaitaṁ guruṇā saha ||

(Śrī Śaṅkarācāryaḥ: *Tattvopadeśaḥ* - ślo 87)

Siddhānta Sāra Prakaraṇam
Chapter on
The Teaching of the Quintessence of the Culmination of all Doctrines

Exegesis: The State of Non-duality transcending the scope of the intellect, thought and speech – and therefore called *amanaska* (freed of the medium of the mind) – is indeed the Sole Verity. This esoteric and the concealed content of this *Upanishad* is the profound Truth. The attainment of this Non-dual Experience alone terminates the misery of the transmigratory cycle of *saṃsāra*.

Bhagavan delivers this implicit Truth, clear and explicit, encapsulating it in a single verse.

40. Akilavē dāntasid dāntasā rattai
yahamuṇmai yāha vaṟaiva – ṉahañcet
tahamadu vāhi laṟivuru vāmav
vahamadē micca maṟi.

Verse-split: *akila vēdānta siddānta sārattai aham uṇmaiyāha aṟaivaṉ, aham cettu aham aduvāhil, aṟivuru ām av ahamadē miccam aṟi.*

Import: I shall truly proclaim the quintessence of the *upadeśa* that is conclusively arrived at by Vedānta in all its entirety. With the death of the Ego in the Natural State of Being the Self and in experiencing the unity of Brahman and the Self, the Self alone – the very form of Awareness – remains as the Sole survivor.

Commentary: The *Upanishads* are called *Vedānta* (the concluding part of the *Vedas* containing the conclusively established Truth in them). The Principle of Verity that is unfolded and upheld in them is called *Siddhāntam* and that can be confirmed and ascertained only by experience. This Text bespeaks of such an experientially ascertained axiomatic verity. In the state of the Experience of the Principle of Self, the Self is the sole survivor and all else – the mind, its expanded manifestation like the worlds that flourish within the mind, God, *jīvās* et al – perish when their source and the progenitor ego is liquidated. What remains, Sole and Whole, is the Non-dual Content. That is *Sat* (Being) and *Chit* (Consciousness), the mass of Awareness. It is the unassailable basic Truth of everything, like the basic gold of all ornaments of gold.

What is to be known is that the names and forms are many and momentary and therefore unreal. The Imperishable and Changeless Being and Awareness, is the Eternal Reality. When the unreal perishes, the Real alone remains, is the Truth declared.

This State of Non-duality – the Experience of being the Self – is attained by being solely centered on *Ātma Vicāra*, through association with the enlightened sages, devotion and discrimination, and sinking into the Heart by the steady practice of *Ātma Vicāra* leading to the extirpation of the ego.

This is the quintessence of the contents of this *Upanishad*, *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu*.

सर्ववेदान्तसिद्धान्तसारं वच्मि यथार्थतः ।
स्वयं मृत्वा स्वयं भूत्वा स्वयमेवावशिष्यते ॥

sarvavedāntasiddhāntasāraṁ vacmi yathārthataḥ ।
svayaṁ mṛtvā svayaṁ bhūtvā svayamevāvaśiṣyate ।।

Śrī Ramaṇārpaṇamastu

OM TAT SAT

Addendum
Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu – *Kaliveṇbā*

Verse of a *veṇbā* form gets metamorphosed into a *Kaliveṇbā* when the last syllable of the last metrical foot of the *veṇbā* verse is changed suitably and followed by a separate word joined by a hyphen. The change of *veṇbā* into a *Kaliveṇbā* by Sri Bhagavan himself was mainly to facilitate the *pārāyaṇa* by devotees of these texts in the presence of Sri Bhagavan as these link words were ready reminders of the first metrical foot of the succeeding verse. Moreover these link words bestow further light and clarity on the content of the main verse and render easy the recitation of the Text "*Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu*" the foremost among texts fit to be committed to memory. Hence the *Kaliveṇbā* is reproduced here as an addendum.

Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu – *Kaliveṇbā*

a) uḷḷadala duḷḷavuṇar vuḷḷadō vuḷḷaporu
ḷuḷḷalaṟa vuḷḷattē yuḷḷadā – luḷḷameṉu
muḷḷaporu ḷuḷḷaleva ṉuḷḷattē yuḷḷapaḍi
yuḷḷadē yuḷḷa luṇar*vāyē* – *uḷḷē*

b) maraṇabaya mikkuḷavam makkaḷara ṇāha
maraṇabava millā mahēśaṉ – caraṇamē
cārvartañ cārvoḍutāñ cāvuṯṟār cāveṇṇañ
cārvarō cāvā davar*nittar* – *pārvaisēr*

1. nāmulahaṅ kāṇḍalā ṉāṉā vāñ cattiyuḷa
vōrmudalai yoppa lorutalaiyē – nāmavuruc
cittiramum pārppāṉuñ cērpaḍamu māroḷiyu
mattaṉaiyun tāṉā mavaṉ*ulahu* – *karttaṉuyir*

2. mummudalai yemmatamu muṟkoḷḷu mōrmudalē
mummudalāy niṟkumeṉḏṟu mummudalu – mummudalē
yeṉṉalahaṅ kāra mirukkumaṭṭē yāṉkeṭṭut
taṉṉilaiyi ṉiṯṟa ṯṟalai*yāhum* – *koṉṉē*

3. ulahumeypoyt tōṯṟa mulahaṟivā maṉḏṟeṉ
ḏṟulahusukha maṉḏṟeṉ ḏṟuraitte – ṉulahuviṭṭut
taṉṉaiyōrn doṉḏṟiraṇḍu tāṉaṯṟu nāṉaṯṟa
vannilaiyel lārkkumop pām*ūṉe* – *tuṉṉum*

4. uruvantā n̲āyi n̲ulahupara mat̲r̲ā
muruvantā n̲an̲d̲r̲ē luvat̲r̲i – n̲uruvattaik
kaṇṇur̲udal yāvan̲evan̲ kaṇṇalār̲ kāṭciyuṇḍō
kaṇṇadutā n̲antamilāk kaṇ*ṇāmē* – *en̲n̲il*

5. uḍalpañca kōśa vuruvadan̲ā laindu
muḍalen̲n̲uñ solli loḍuṅgu – muḍalan̲d̲r̲i
yuṇḍō vulaha muḍalviṭ ṭulahattaik
kaṇḍā ruḷarō kazhar̲u*vāi* – *kaṇda*

6. ulahaim pulan̲ga ḷuruvēr̲an̲ d̲r̲avvaim
pulan̲aim por̲ikkup pulan̲ā – mulahaiman̲a
mon̲d̲r̲aim por̲ivāyā lōrndiḍuda lān̲man̲attai
yan̲d̲r̲iyula kuṇḍō var̲ai*nērē* – *nin̲d̲r̲a*

7. ulahar̲ivu mon̲d̲r̲ā yudittoḍuṅgu mēn̲u
mulahar̲ivu tan̲n̲ā loḷiru – mulahar̲ivu
tōn̲d̲r̲imar̲ai dar̲kiḍan̲āyt tōn̲d̲r̲imar̲ai yādoḷirum
pūn̲d̲r̲amā mak̲dē poruḷ*āmā* – *lēn̲d̲r̲adām*

8. eppeyariṭ ṭevvuruvi lēttin̲umār pēruruvi
lapporuḷaik kāṇvazhiya dāyin̲umam – meypporuḷi
n̲uṇ maiyit̲r̲a n̲uṇmaiyin̲ai yōrndoḍuṅgi yon̲d̲r̲udalē
yuṇmaiyir̲ kāṇa luṇar*ndiduha* – *viṇmai*

9. iraṭṭaikaṇ muppuḍika ḷen̲d̲r̲umon̲d̲r̲u pat̲r̲i
yiruppavā mavvon̲d̲r̲ē ten̲d̲r̲u – karuttin̲uṭ
kaṇḍār̲ kazhalumavai kaṇḍava rēyuṇmai
kaṇḍār kalaṅgārē kāṇ*irulpōn̲* – *maṇdum*

10. ar̲iyāmai viṭṭar̲iviṇ d̲r̲āmar̲ivu viṭṭav
var̲iyāmai yin̲d̲r̲āhu manda – var̲ivu
mar̲iyā maiyumārkken̲ d̲r̲ammudalān taṇṇai
yar̲iyu mar̲ivē yar̲i*vā* – *mar̲iba*

11. aṟivuṟun taṉṉai yaṟiyā dayalai
yaṟiva daṟiyāmai yaṉḏṟi – yaṟivō
vaṟivayaṟ kādhārat taṉṉai yaṟiya
vaṟivaṟi yāmai yaṟum*ē* – *yaṟavē*

12. aṟivaṟi yāmaiyu maṯṟadaṟi vāmē
yaṟiyuma duṇmaiyaṟi vāhā – daṟitaṟ
kaṟivittaṟ kaṉṉiyamiṉ ḏṟāyavirva dāṯṟā
ṉaṟivāhum pāzhaṉ ḏṟaṟiv*āi* – *cheṟivāya*

13. jñāṉamān tāṉēmey nāṉāvā jñāṉamañ
jñāṉamām poyyāmañ jñāṉamumē – jñāṉamān
taṉṉaiyaṉḏṟi yiṉḏṟaṇika ḍāmpalavum poymeyyām
poṉṉaiyaṉḏṟi yuṇḍō puhal*uḍalnā* – *ṉeṉṉumat*

14. taṉmaiyuṇḍēṉ muṉṉilaipa ḍarkkaika ṭāmuḷavān
taṉmaiyi ṉuṇmaiyait tāṉāyndu – taṉmaiyaṟiṉ
muṉṉilaipa ḍarkkai muḍivuṯroṉ ḏṟāyoḷirun
taṉmaiyē taṉṉilaimai tāṉ*idamu* – *maṉṉum*

15. nigazhviṉaip paṯṟi yiṟappedirvu niṟpa
nigazhkā lavaiyu nigazhvē – nigazhvoṉḏṟē
yiṉḏṟuṇmai tērā tiṟappedirvu tēravuṉa
loṉḏṟiṉḏṟi yeṇṇa vuṉal*uṇara* – *niṉḏraporuḷ*

16. nāmaṉḏṟi nāḷēdu nāḍēdu nāḍuṅgā
ṉāmuḍambē ṉāṇāṭṭu ṇāmpaḍuva – nāmuḍambō
nāmiṉḏṟaṉ ḏṟeṉḏṟumoṉḏṟu nāḍiṅgaṅ geṅgumoṉḏṟā
ṉāmuṇḍu nāṇāḍi ṉām*ūṉa* – *māmiv*

17. uḍaṉāṉē taṉṉai yuṇarārk kuṇarndārk
kuḍalaḷavē nāṉṯra ṉuṇarārk – kuḍaluḷḷē
taṉṉuṇarndārk kellaiyaṟat tāṉoḷiru nāṉiduvē
yiṉṉavartam bhēdameṉa veṇṇuvāy – *muṉṉām*

18. ulahuṇmai yāhu muṇarvillārk kuḷḷārk
kulahaḷavā muṇmai yuṇarārk – kulahiṉuk
kādhāra māyuruvaṯ ṟārumuṇarn dāruṇmai
yīdāhum bhēdamivark keṇṇuha – *bhēda*

19. vidhimati mūla vivēka milārkkē
vidhimati vellum vivādam – vidhimatikaṭ
kōrmudalān taṉṉai yuṇarndā ravaitaṇandār
cārvarō piṉṉumavai cāṯruvāy – *cārbavai*

20. kāṇun taṉaiviṭṭut tāṉkaḍavu ḷaikkāṇal
kāṇu maṉōmayamāṅ kāṭcitaṉaik – kāṇumavaṉ
ḏṟāṉkaḍavuḷ kaṇḍāṉān taṉmudalait tāṉmudalpōyt
tāṉkaḍavu ḷaṉḏṟiyila dāl*uyirāt – tāṉ karudum*

21. taṉṉaittāṉ kāṇa ṯralaivaṉ ṯraṇaikkāṇa
leṉṉumpaṉ ṉūluṇmai yeṉṉaiyeṉiṉ – ṯraṉṉaittāṉ
kāṇalevaṉ ṯrāṉoṉḏṟāṟ kāṇavoṇā dēṯralaivaṟ
kāṇaleva ṉūṇādal kāṇ*evaiyuṅ – kāṇum*

22. matikkoḷi tandam matikku ḷoḷiru
matiyiṉai yuḷḷē maḍakkip – patiyiṟ
padittiḍuda laṉḏṟip patiyai matiyāṉ
matittiḍuda leṅgaṉ mati*yāy – matiyiladāl*

23. nāṉeṉḏṟit dēha navilā duṟakkattu
nāṉiṉḏṟeṉ ḏṟāru navilvadilai – nāṉoṉ
ḏṟezhundapi ṉellā mezhuminda nāṉeṅ
gezhumeṉḏṟu nuṇmatiyā leṇṇa – *nazhuvum*

24. jaḍavuḍaṉā ṉeṉṉādu saccit tudiyā
duḍalaḷavā nāṉoṉ ḏṟudikku – miḍaiyilitu
cicjaḍakgi ranthibandhañ jīvaṉuṭpa meyyahandai
yiccamu sāramaṉa meṇṇeṉṉē – *vichchai*

25. uruppaṯṟi yuṇḍā muruppaṯṟi niṟku
muruppaṯṟi yuṇḍumiha vōṅgu – muruviṭ
ṭuruppaṯṟun tēḍiṉā lōṭṭam piḍikku
muruvaṯṟa pēyahandai yōr*vāy* – *karuvām*

26. ahandaiyuṇ ḍāyi ṉaṉaittumuṇ ḍāhu
mahandaiyiṉ ḏṟēliṉ ḏṟaṉaittu – mahandaiyē
yāvumā mādalāl yādideṉḏṟu nāḍalē
yōvudal yāvumeṉa vōr*mudalpōṉ* – *mēvuminda*

27. nāṉudiyā duḷḷanilai nāmaduvā yuḷḷanilai
nāṉudikkun tāṉamadai nāḍāma – ṉāṉudiyāt
taṉṉizhappaic cārvadevaṉ cārāmaṯ ṯrāṉaduvān
taṉṉilaiyi ṉiṟpadevaṉ cāṯṟu*di* – *muṉṉar* ˙

28. ezhumbu mahandai yezhumiḍattai nīril
vizhunda poruḷkāṇa vēṇḍi – muzhuhudalpōṟ
kūrndamati yāṟpēccu mūccaḍakkik koṇḍuḷḷē
yāzhndaṟiya vēṇḍu maṟi*piṇampōl* – *tīrnduḍalam*

29. nāṉeṉḏṟu vāyā ṉavilāduḷ ḷāzhmaṉattā
ṉāṉeṉḏṟeṅ gundumeṉa nāḍudalē – jñāṉaneṟi
yāmaṉḏṟi yaṉḏṟidunā ṉāmaduveṉ ḏṟuṉṉaṟuṇai
yāmaduvi cāramā māv*adanāṉ* – *mīmuṟaiyē*

30. nāṉā reṉamaṉamuṇ ṇāḍiyuḷa naṇṇavē
nāṉā mavaṉḏṟalai nāṇamuṟa – nāṉāṉāt
tōṉḏṟumoṉḏṟu tāṉāhat tōṉḏṟiṉunā ṉaṉḏṟuporuḷ
pūṉḏṟamadu tāṉām porul*poṅgit* – *tōṉḏṟavē*

31. taṉṉai yazhittezhunda taṉmayā ṉandaruk
keṉṉai yuḷadoṉ ḏṟiyaṯṟudaṟkut – taṉṉaiyalā
taṉṉiya moṉḏṟu maṟiyā ravarnilaimai
yiṉṉadeṉ ḏṟuṉṉa levaṉ*paramāp* – *paṉṉum*

32. adunīyeṉ ḏṟammaṟaika ḷārttiḍavun taṉṉai
yeduveṉḏṟu tāṉḏṟērn dirāa – dadunā
ṉiduvaṉḏṟeṉ ḏṟeṇṇalura ṉiṉmaiyiṉā leṉḏṟu
maduvētā ṉāyamarva dāl*ē* – *yaduvumalādu*

33. eṉṉai yaṟiyēṉā ṉeṉṉai yaṟindēṉā
ṉeṉṉa ṉahaippuk kiḍaṉāhu – meṉṉai
taṉaiviḍaya mākkaviru tāṉuṇḍō voṉḏṟā
yaṉaivaraṉu bhūtiyuṇmai yāl*ōr* – *niṉaivaṟave*

34. eṉḏṟu mevarkku miyalbā yuḷaporuḷai
yoṉḏṟu muḷattu ḷuṇarndunilai – niṉḏṟiḍā
duṇḍiṉ ḏṟuruvaruveṉ ḏroṉḏṟiraṇ ḍaṉḏṟeṉḏṟē
caṇḍaiyiḍaṉ māyaic cazhak*kozhiha* – *voṇḍiyulam*

35. siddhamā yuḷporuḷait tērndiruttal siddhipiṟa
siddhiyelāñ soppaṉamār siddhikaḷē –niddiraiviṭ
ṭōrndā lavaimeyyō vuṇmainilai niṉḏṟu poymmai
tīrndār tiyaṅguvarō tēr*ndirunī* – *kūrndumayal*

36. nāmuḍaleṉ ḏṟeṇṇiṉala nāmaduveṉ ḏṟeṇṇumadu
nāmaduvā niṟpadaṟku naṯṟuṇaiyē – yāmeṉḏṟu
nāmaduveṉ ḏṟeṇṇuvadē ṉāṉmaṉida ṉeṉḏṟeṇumō
nāmaduvā niṟkumada ṉāl*aṟiyā* – *dēmuyaḷum*

37. sādhakatti lēduvitañ sāddhiyatti ladduvita
mōdukiṉḏṟa vādamadu muṇmaiyala – vādaravāyt
tāṉḏṟēḍuṅ kālun taṉaiyaḍainta kālattun
tāṉḏṟasama ṉaṉḏṟiyār tāṉ*vittup* – *pōṉdra*

38. viṉaimudaṉā māyiṉ viḷaipayaṉ ḏṟuyppōm
viṉaimudalā reṉḏṟu viṉavit – taṉaiyaṟiyak
karttat tuvampōyk karumamūṉ ḏṟuṅkazhalu
nittamā mutti nilai*yīdē* – *mattanāy*

39. baddhaṉā ṉeṉṉumaṭṭē bandhamutti cintaṉaihaḷ
baddhaṉā reṉḏṟutaṉṉaip pārkkuṅgāṟ – siddhamāy
nittamuttaṉ ḏṟāṉiṟka niṟkādēṟ bandacintai
mutticintai muṉṉiṟku mō*manattuk* – *kottāṅgu*

40. uruva maruva muruvaruva mūṉḏṟā
muṟumutti yeṉṉi luraippa – ṉuruva
maruva muruvaruva māyu mahandai
yuruvazhitaṉ mutti yuṇar*ī* – *darul Ramaṇaṉ*

uḷḷadu nāṟpadu moṉḏṟu kaliveṇbāvā
muḷḷadu kāṭṭu moḷi.

Meaning of the link words in Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu in *Kaliveṇbā* form

a) **(uṇar)vāyē – uḷḷē:-** know it by direct experience – in the mind

b) **nittar – pārvaicēr:-** those who live for ever; we, the perceivers (with the outward perception)

1. **ulahu – karttaṉ uyir:-** the world, God; the jiva (*uyir*). (These words provide the meaning of the first word in the following verse namely 'mummudalai')

2. **(talai)yāhum – koṉṉē:-** the best – the confusing conglomerate (the world)

3. **ūṉe – tuṉṉum:-** the form of body made up of flesh

4. **(kaṇ)ṇāmē – eṉṉil:-** the eye indeed – if we but enquire

5. **(kazharu)vāi – kaṇda:-** tell me – what is seen by the body made up of the five sheaths

6. **nērē – niṉḏṟa:-** as the object in front that is seen by us

7. **(porulā)māl – ēṉḏṟadām:-** the content Supreme – fit to be accepted

8. **(uṇarnd)iduha – viṇmai:-** become aware of it – like the unreal 'blueness' that appears in the sky

9. **irulpōṉ – maṇdum:-** like darkness – very dense

10. **(ari)vām – aṟiba:-** knowledge – the objective knowledge

11. **(aṟu)mē – aṟavē:-** will become naught – having become completely extinct

12. **(aṟi)vāi – cheṟivāya:-** know this – that which is clear, firm and dense

13. **uḍal nāṉ – eṉṉumat:-** the ego which is the notion of "I am" the body

14. **nidamum – maṉṉum:-** as and when – remaining

15. **uṇara – niṉḍra poruḷ:-** on enquiring deeply – that entity that is clearly experienced

16. **ūṉa – māmiv:-** the defective bag of flesh – this

17. **(eṇ)ṇuvāy – muṉṉām:-** know thus – that which is perceived by the eyes

18. **(eṇ)ṇuha – bhēda:-** understand – opposed to one another

19. **(cāṯru)vāy – cārbavai:-** tell me – that which appears in front

20. **uyirāt – tāṉ karudum:-** considering oneself as an individual *jīva*

21. **evaiyuṁ – kāṇum:-** perceiving everything excepting oneself

22. **(mati)yāy – matiyiladāl:-** possible – since itself not possessing knowledge

23. **(eṇ)ṇa – nazhuvum:-** on close scrutiny – becomes naught. (This meaning can be taken as the culmination of verse 23 as well as the start of verse 24)

24. **eṉṉē – vichchai:-** what a wonder?

25. **(yōr)vāy – karuvām:-** know this – the nucleus (the seed) for everything

26. **mudalpōṉ – mēvuminda:-** appearing as if the primal subject – that which shines

27. **(cāṯru)di – muṉṉar:-** tell me – (rising) before everything else

28. piṇampōl – tīrnduḍalam:- the body verily like the corpse – firmly laying down

29. adanāṉ – mīmuṟaiyē:- therefore; as per the excellent method of enquiry mentioned above

30. poṅgit – tōṉḏṟavē:- the Atman, the content of 'sat' pulsating as 'I-I' – on shining

31. paramāp – paṉṉum:- as the Content Beyond – what is spoken of

32. dālē – aduvumalādu:- is it not? in addition to

33. ōr – niṉaivaṟavē:- know it – thoughts becoming extinct (without even a single thought)

34. ozhiha – oṇḍiyulam:- give up – knowing with the mind submerged

35. (tēr)ndirunī – kūrndumayal:- know it by direct experience and abide in Atman – overcome by delusion

36. aṟiyā – dēmuyalum:- remaining ignorant – endeavouring

37. vittup – pōṉdra:- like the seed being the origin for the appearance of a tree

38. (nilai)yīdē – mattanāy:- this, indeed is the state of Deliverance – due to ignornace

39. manattukku – ottāṅgu:- according to the ripeness of each individual

40. īdu – arul Ramaṇaṉ:- this (text of Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu in *kaliveṇbā* metre) graciously bestowed by Bhagavan)

uḷḷadu nāṟpadum oṉḏṟu kaliveṇbāvām uḷḷadu kāṭṭum oḷi:- this *kaliveṇbā* that strings together the forty verses in *veṇbā* metre is the Light that reveals the Reality.

A Note:-

Of the 40/41 verses in *Uḷḷadu Nāṟpadu Anubandham*, 27 verses were culled by Bhagavan from various Sanskrit Texts and were translated by Bhagavan himself into Tamil verses. The details of the source and the number of Tamil verses in seriatim are furnished in the Table below.

	Source	Serial Number of the corresponding Tamil Verse	Total No. of Verses
1	Yoga Vāsiṣṭham	Invocation, 2, 3, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	12
2	Śrī Devikālottaram	9, 25	2
3	From Śrī Śaṅkarācārya		
	a) Mohamudgaram	1	
	b) Ekaśloki	7	4
	c) Vivekacūḍāmaṇi	12	
	d) Tattvopadeśaḥ	39	
4	Śrīmad Bhāgavatam	5	1
5	Composed by Śrī Bhagavān (Sanskrit + Tamil)	8 & 10	2
6	'Who' (Lakṣmaṇa Śarma) Tamil	11	1
7	Subhāṣitaratna	4, 34	2

8	Sādhak Avasthā by Śrī Sadāśivabrahmendra	37	1
9	Upaniṣat	6	1
10	Kaṭharudropaniṣat	40	1
		Total	27

The following verses were adapted and translated by Bhagavan from other Texts and by himself in Tamil.

	Source	**Serial Number of the corresponding Tamil Verse**	**Total No. of Verses**
1	Ashṭāṅga Hṛdayam	18, 19	2
2	Prabhuliṅga Līlai	20	1
3	Verses composed by Bhagavān himself in Tamil	From 13 to 17 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38	11
		Total	14

Total number of Verses in *Anubandham* = 27 + 14 = 41 (inclusive of the Benedictory Stanza)

A Note:-

1) 11 Verses from 13 to 17 and 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38 are original compositions of Bhagavan.

2) Verses 8 & 10 were composed in Sanskrit to start with and subsequently translated into Tamil by Bhagavan.

3) Lakshmana Sarma heard Bhagavan speak of the theme of the 11th verse and composed it in Sanskrit. Later Bhagavan himself translated it into Tamil.

4) The first two lines of the 12th verse were composed by Bhagavan in Tamil to which were added two lines – the Tamil translation of the 86th verse from *Viveka Cūdāmaṇi* of Śrī Śaṅkara by Bhagavan himself.

5) Verse 20 is an adaptation of 2 verses from Chapter 10 of *Prabhu Liṅga Līlai* – a Text in Kannada.

6) Verse 2 & 3, verses from 21 to 24, 26 to 30 and the invocatory verse (totally 12) are translations in Tamil by Bhagavan from *Yoga Vāsiṣtham*.

7) Verses 1, 7, 12 & 39 are translations from Sanskrit rendered by Bhagavan in Tamil from Śrī Śaṅkara's works.

8) Verse 5 is the translation of a verse in *Bhāgavatam*.

9) Verses 9 and 25 are translations of verses from *Devi Kālottaram* (Verse 46, 47 of *Devi Kālottaram* – a Translation of the entire Text by Bhagavan – may be read along with these and compared).

10) Verses 18 & 19 are adaptations in Tamil from *Aṣhṭāṅga Hṛdayam* – a Text in Malayalam.

11) Verses 4 & 34 are the translation rendered by Bhagavan in Tamil from *Subhāṣitaratna.*

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